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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXXVI No. 2304 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC MAR. 18 1944

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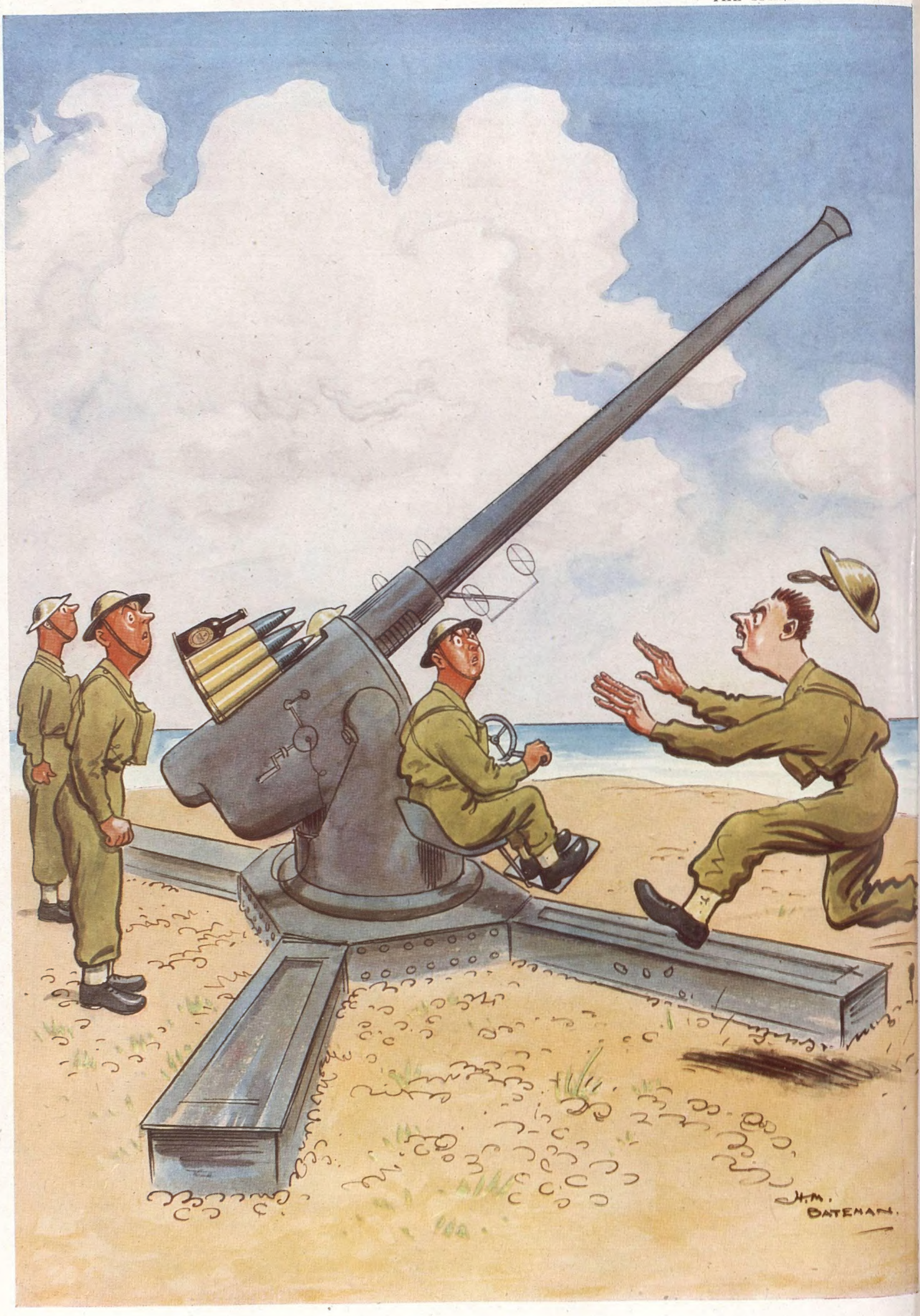

"My Goodness—My Guinness"

G.E.1182.

Volume CLXXVI No. 2304 The SPHERE, London, March 18, 1944

THE SPHERE

With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"

The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

THE STEADY STREAM OF SUPPLIES FLOWING INTO THE ANZIO BRIDGEHEAD: A SCENE IN THE INNER CORNER OF THE SMALL HARBOUR, where two Tank Landing Ships are unloading. Note the bomb-damaged buildings of the town in the background

Supplies to the Allied beachhead at Anzio and Nettuno have been maintained despite every effort of the enemy to interrupt the steady flow of materials. Ships have been attacked by radio-controlled glider bombs, submarines and fighter-bombers. The enemy has also tried to disrupt operations by long-range artillery shelling with 210- and 170-mm. guns. The supplies are brought in by Liberty ships, which anchor offshore and unload their cargoes into Tank Landing Craft and "Ducks." The supply lorries drive straight off to the dumps, thereby clearing the harbour very rapidly. Owing to the shallow water at some of the beaches, the Tank Landing Craft often have to offload their cargoes into "Ducks." After being put ashore, the supplies are scattered all over the bridgehead area in mixed dumps, so that if one is hit by the enemy the supply programme is not vitally affected

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 237

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

If Hope Were Not Taxed....

If hope were not taxed (which it is, and heavily), I admit I should be seeing in these Russian Ukraine blows a parallel with August 1918. But Nazi toughness has no parallel in history. Goebbels may harp on the political terrors of Bolshevism. German toughness on the Russian front is clearly bred of the individual German soldier's doubts as to the reception he will meet if he fall into Russian hands. Allied propaganda is no good at all now for removing his *idée fixe*, bred of propaganda and guilty conscience. Propaganda has destroyed itself as a weapon. Even the German private has ceased to believe Hitler's. Good or bad or indifferent, all propaganda comes out of the lie factory, in his disillusioned view. Myself, I am immune from wishful thinking, and, looking back, I judge I was never very prone to optimism. I read with amusement and perhaps surprise the list of occasions for wishful thinking which cost Mr. Charles Graves both cash and disappointments. I have lived more in the wilderness than he. Rumour and optimism flourish most where two or three are gathered together. That is why the Stock Exchange for fifty years has been *locus classicus* for rumour. People must do something while they stand about and wait. It is odd that not one of Mr. Graves's hot certainties between 1942 and to date ever penetrated to my hermit's cave, to afford a temporary surge of hope. Since September 1939 (a rare proof of optimism!), I never once believed we should lose in the end. I make no doubt to-day we shall win—in the end. Nothing which any pundit writes or says to-day can persuade me that I am sharing that knowledge with God or His pinch-beck imitators. I 've heard and read enough; and I crave leave to dispute the apology of "optimists" that wishful thinking has kept up national morale. On the contrary, our national spirit of unity, courage and discipline rose high in our mortal danger, and has progressively fallen with every advance to the certainty of ultimate victory.

The Initiative.—

The *feu de joie* sounded in Moscow again on March 4—this time for a notable advance in Western Ukraine. I am never ready with the right map to follow these sudden surprise announcements on the wireless. My newspaper maps are always out-of-date. It don't signify. I am not an armchair strategist. Enough that I grasp (and cannot doubt) the big fact. The Russians completely enjoy the initiative, and, in frost or thaw, exploit it. The side which can strike with surprise to its enemy wherever it pleases, whenever it pleases, always with success, and never in the same section of a many-hundred mile front, that side is on top, and there is only one end. On land, in the East, it is Russia's initiative. In the air, in the West, it is ours and America's. In the Far Eastern waters, it is America's and Australia's. Nowhere is it the Nazis'. Exactly as in Russia Stalin strikes now at Narva, now in the Ukraine, now in the Dnieper Bend, now in the Crimea, so in the air in the West do the Western Allies strike now at Berlin, now in Austria, now in France, now in the Balkans. The Nazis still have mighty, disciplined armies and unbroken morale. They still possess what seemed immense strategic reserves in the days when a "second front" was a shadowy anxiety for the Nazis and a distant hope of the Allies. Those days are past. The second front has arrived

WHAT THE RAIN HAS DONE TO THE MEDITERRANEAN AIRFIELDS. The winter snows and heavy rainfalls turned the North African and Italian aerodromes into swamps. But the bad weather did not stop flying from these water-logged fields, because metal runways were able to provide firm surfaces for both light and heavy aircraft to take off and land. This picture, showing Hurricanes "at dispersal" amidst the mud, was taken near Algiers

with knobs on. And no amount of concrete and rubble can dam the breaches in a crumbling dyke when the full tide of the Atlantic comes seeping and breaking in along all its length. Stalin's confidence is justified.

Bulgarities.—

There is no longer any doubt (says *Sunday Times*) that Bulgaria has made contacts with the Allies to ascertain their peace conditions, and good reason to believe that she is willing to accept the status of co-belligerent. So far, so good, if true. But it appears the Bulgars come with bargaining counters in their hands. They want to get out with as little sacrifice as possible—that is natural; they feel they are entitled to keep much of the territories of their neighbours which with Nazi help they have overrun. That is typical. When did not the Bulgars grab and plot and bargain? In the days ahead the Allies are likely to have negotiations with one or two Balkan States which backed the wrong horse again. Can we not *from the start* keep the page clean for the record of the "new diplomacy," and make it perfectly clear to Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary and What-not, that *there will be no bargaining*. If they come, they come with humility and promises of tardy repentance for decades of chicanery, to plead for mercy before the victors' judgment seat; to restore their ill-gotten gains and to ask once more for a place for repentance in the comity of nations and a last chance to prove themselves worthy of co-operating in a new order of international relations. Even if such a declaration retard for a few months the inevitable end of the Balkan satellites and the end of the war with the Nazis, the Allies might well consider the price not too high for a clean start to a new chapter in European diplomacy. In the Augean stables of Europe, the central muck-heap has lain for a hundred years in the Balkans. The Bulgars cannot come with clean hands. At least they must come with empty hands—and hearts filled with genuine repentance—to plead for mercy and justice.

Ministerial Record-breaking.—

A thought (which I have not picked up from common talk or from the Press) occurred to me the other day. It is this: Mr. Churchill's colleagues in the Government are most of them heading for an all-time record in our political history, not only a wartime, but a peacetime record. Some of them already have held down their jobs as heads of departments of State longer than any of their predecessors in earlier war periods, and are qualifying for records of office-holding longevity even over holders of office in peacetime. Exceptional statesmen like Palmerston, Liverpool, Gladstone, and so on, held office for long periods, but Palmerston and Gladstone at least had shorter or longer interruptions in continuity. Five years in the same office is a very long spell in wartime and above the average in peace. In the war of 1914-18, I doubt if the over-all period of continuity in the same office averaged one year, certainly not as much as two. It is the British habit and privilege to criticise Governments and political office-holders, and even in this austerity and disciplined war we have not entirely foregone our privilege and habits of luxury. So much does the habit of criticism survive, that we are puzzled by these Ministerial longevities, and rather than generously chalk them up to merit on the part of the holders, we search about for more oblique explanations and sometimes attribute the phenomenon to an almost quixotic loyalty of the Premier for his old friends and wartime comrades of all parties. When we are in critical mood, we declare that any and every Minister is safe for the duration under the umbrella of Mr. Churchill's loyalty and tolerance to his colleagues. Perhaps it is a little *ungenerous* of us. Even the Premier's fine loyalty could not protect notorious incompetence. Let us take comfort and acquire faith by the practice of a little generosity and a little logic.

Rating and Taxation.—

Sir William Darling's letter to *The Times* on March 3 under this heading deserves to be widely studied, as does Mr. Larkin's of Coventry. We have in the years past often applauded the clarity of various Chancellors' Budget statements. No one, I think, has ever yet praised the clarity of income-tax policy, method or instruction. Is it indeed beyond the wit of trained English financiers and accountants to devise a simple, equitable and reasonable method of raising money by taxation for the necessary expenditures by central and local governments; is it indeed impossible to combine the claims made on individual taxpayers for contribution to Exchequer and local government into one claim, to be afterwards centrally allocated? Our income-tax system has for decades deserved all the contempt and detestation which people feel for a muddled compromise which no amount of notes and guidance can ever make intelligible or tolerable. The "schedules" of income tax not only overlap and confuse. Schedules A, D and E, for various reasons stand out as masterpieces of clumsy incompetence. As Sir William said: "The window tax taxed windows [and light] out of existence, the whisky tax is taxing whisky out of existence, the 'house' tax seems to be by way of having the same effect." What indeed boots the drive for better houses and owned homes (the sanest safeguard against revolution), if ownership of a house is made a crushing liability. Are we indeed as a race adequately efficient in science, medicine, industry, and so forth, and utterly incompetent in finance and accountancy and allied subjects?

The Tipsy Structure.—

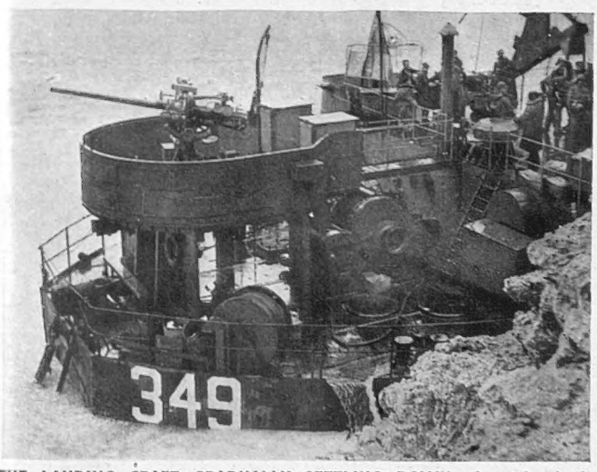
In the years ahead, we are going to be taxed as no people have ever been taxed in times of peace. In the years behind we have been taxed as no people have ever been taxed in war. We have shouldered the burden of war and we have revealed a unique national conscience of obligation to meet the needs of a more decent and equitable post-war Britain. There can be few Britons who would not cheerfully pay still more if by simplification of claims made on them they could be spared the afflictions of the incomprehensible, and all the bitterness and sense of injustice that lie in mysterious, complicated, clumsy, muddled and basically bad forms of taxation. There never was in our history such a moment for a grand-scale attempt to simplify and clarify by root and branch, replanning the whole tipsy structure of shack on shack, amendment on amendment, which is the fabric of our present system of taxation. The British taxpayer deserves this tardy tribute to his patriotism and grit.

THE OLD STAGER

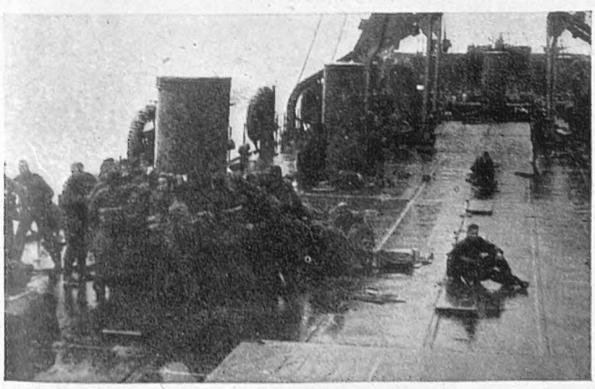
LANDING CRAFT MAKING THE PASSAGE FROM ANZIO TO NAPLES IS WRECKED OFF THE ITALIAN COAST. The ship is here seen sinking after the prisoners and ship's officers had reached the rocks in the foreground. Fourteen of the men were later swept from these rocks and met their death in the raging sea

DRAMA at DAYBREAK

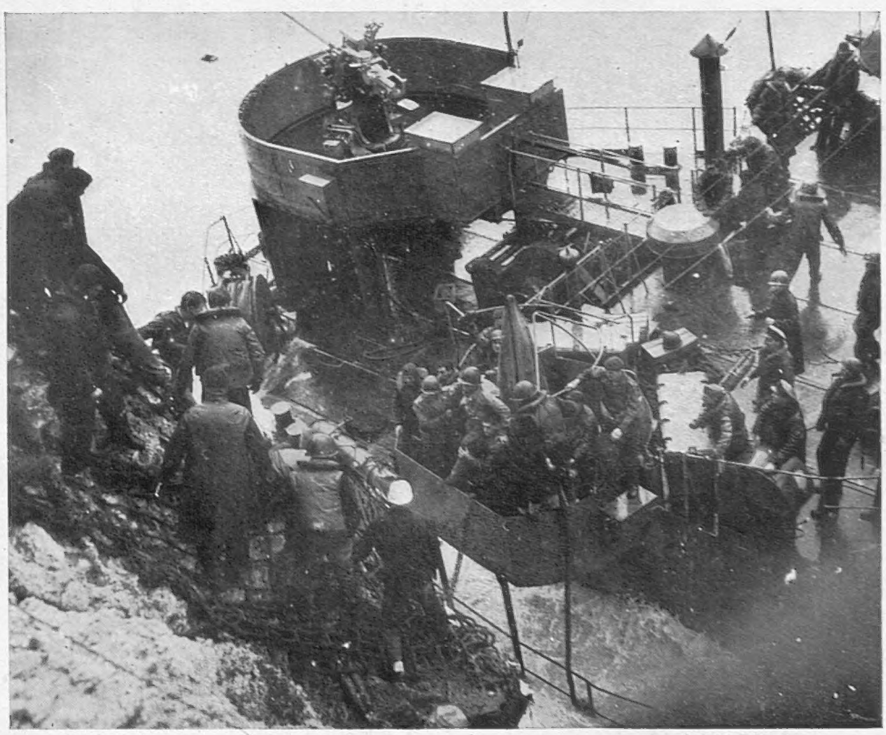
A Ship from the Anzio Beachhead is Wrecked



THE LANDING CRAFT GRADUALLY SETTLING DOWN after she had been battered to pieces alongside the island



THE SCENE AS THE SHIP LURCHED ON TO THE ROCKS, with prisoners holding on. Note the two sliding across the deck



JUST BEFORE THE SHIP BROKE UP. Soldiers on board the Landing Craft jump to safety—into nets laid on the side of the slippery island rocks

The American Landing Craft No. 349 was conveying German prisoners from the Anzio beachhead to Naples when she ran into a violent storm. The ship had to anchor in the lee of an island to shelter from the gale, but changing winds caused her to drag her anchors. She was driven on to the rocks, and within a few minutes had been badly holed. By the time daybreak had arrived the Landing Craft was being thrashed to pieces.

The American and British soldiers, the German prisoners and some members of the crew managed to make the jump from ship to cliff face, but some naval officers and prisoners were unable to reach safety before the ship broke in two. They were able, however, to jump into floats and managed to reach a huge rock, where they were marooned. Before they were able to be rescued by lifeline a number were swept away by the terrific waves and 14 lost their lives.

The first man to leave the ship was an American seaman, who made a terrific leap from a gun-mounting in the stern on to the cliff face with a lifeline. Each of the passengers in turn had to make a similar jump as the ship swung near: they then clung to the ropes held by the crew and by the Italian natives of the island.

NEW PICTURES FROM ITALY

LITTORIO AIRFIELD, NEAR THE ITALIAN CAPITAL: A new picture of the airport and marshalling yards at Littorio, four and a half miles to the north-east of Rome. Hundreds of bomb craters are to be seen among the administration buildings and across the railroad tracks where Allied bombers splashed the target during attacks against communications systems and air bases. In peacetime, Littorio was a civilian airport, and the field was used as a base for air transport services. Now it is being used similarly for transport services, but mainly for the reinforcing of the German armies in the field

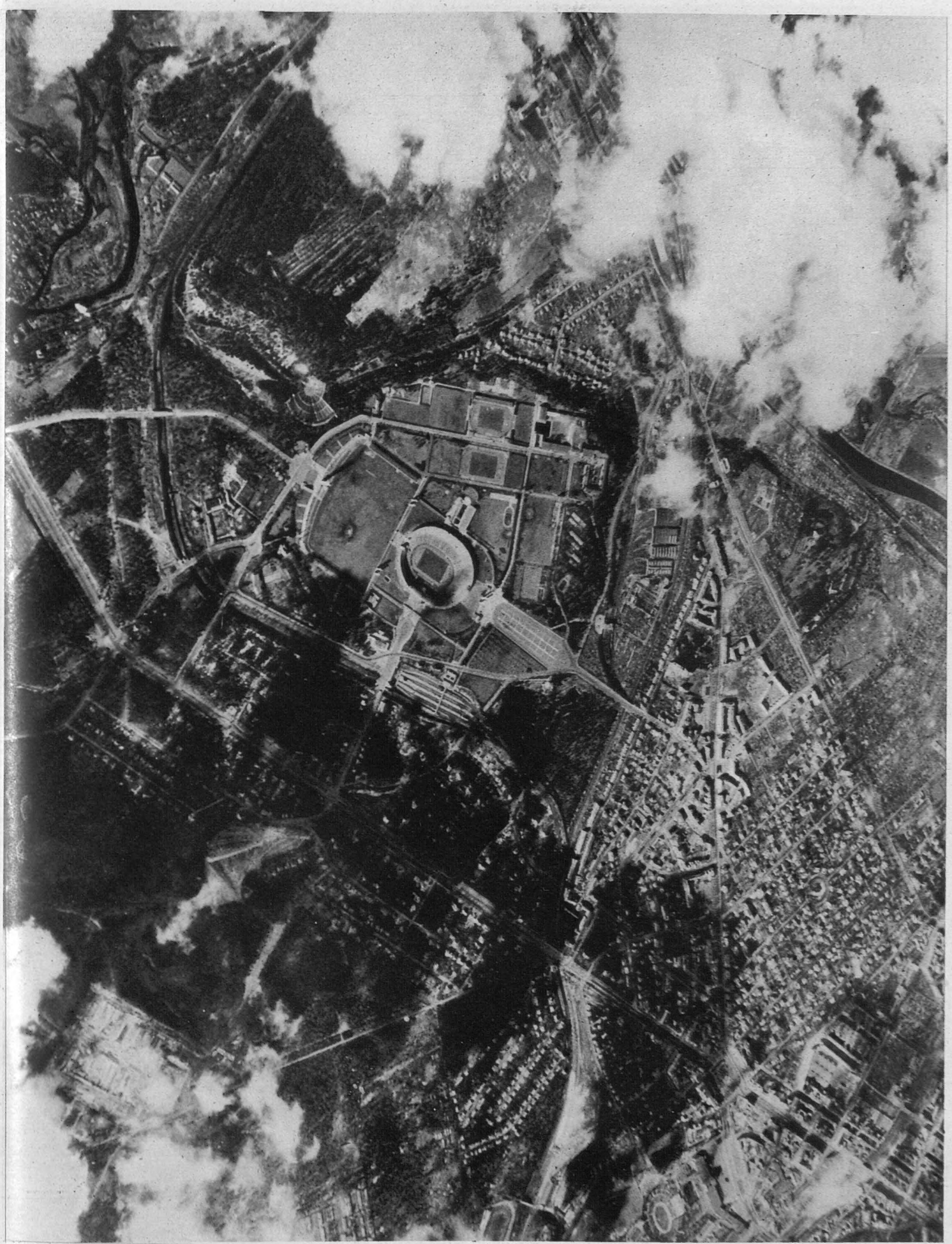
MRS. ERNEST HEMINGWAY IN ITALY: Martha Gellhorn is the wife of the famous novelist who wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. After having covered the Civil War in Spain, she is now acting as war correspondent for an American journal in Italy. Here she is seen during a visit to the Fifth Army front talking to Indian soldiers in the Cassino area

THE ALLIED COMMANDER VISITS THE AMERICAN FORCES: Sir Harold Alexander is here seen chatting with American Rangers beside a bomb-blasted building during a recent visit to the beachhead. The Rangers—who have been teamed up with Commandos, their British counterpart—fought as advance patrols in the Anzio battles and took part in many heavy engagements

MODERN FLORENCE NIGHTINGALES ON THE ANZIO FRONT: Eight British sisters and one American nurse are working side by side with Army medical orderlies at the Second U.K. Mobile Casualty Clearing Station at Anzio. The sisters are not only stout workers, but they are as stouthearted as any soldier. The Germans have dive-bombed and machine-gunned the Station on a number of occasions, but they still carry on undaunted. With the nurses in this picture is Lieut.-Colonel D. McVicat, M.C., who commands the Second U.K. Mobile Casualty Clearing Station

MAORIS CAPTURE A GERMAN PATROL ON THE ROAD TO ROME. Captives and captor shelter in a ditch from German gunfire along the main Rome road on the outskirts of Cassino

SUNSHADES FROM THE ANZIO CAFÉS protect Fifth Army gunners from the rain. In peacetime these gaudy umbrellas sheltered the café patrons from the sun: now they keep the gunners dry at teatime



TAKEN FROM ONE OF THE AMERICAN DAYLIGHT RAIDERS: THE MAIN REICH SPORTS STADIUM IN BERLIN—home of the Olympic Games—is clearly visible in this photograph taken during the great raid carried out on March 6

BERLIN BY DAYLIGHT

The Great Onslaught on the German Capital by American Day Bombers

First Official Pictures Showing the City under Attack

On Monday of last week, March 6, in one of the greatest daylight raids of the whole war up to that date, powerful forces of American heavy bombers flew as far as Berlin to attack factories, airfields and other military installations in and around the German capital. They were accompanied by strong fighter escorts, and great battles in the air took place all along the outward and homeward routes. The stream of Fortresses and Liberators was 15 miles long, and they flew for half an hour over the city, which had, on this occasion, its first experience of a big daylight attack.

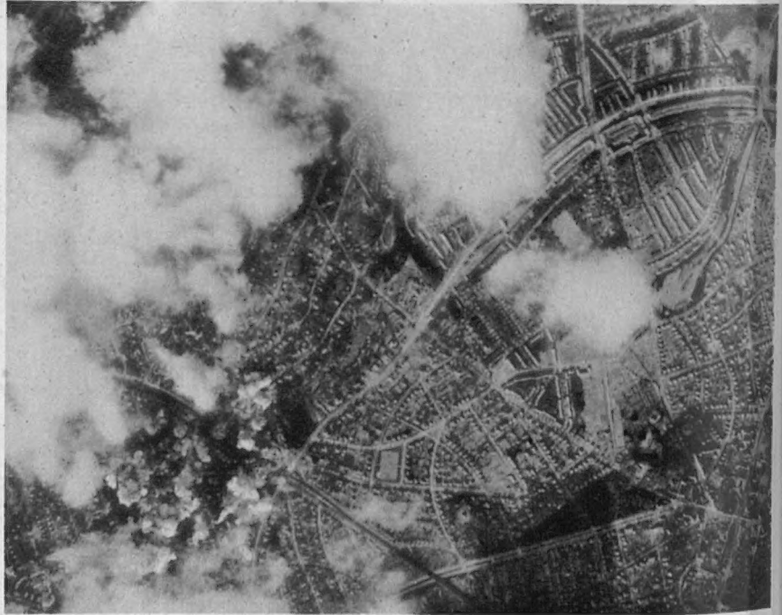
Even the Germans admitted that "the bulk of the formations" reached the city and passed over the central district. The American crews which took part reported that when they left Berlin they could see two large areas burning, with the flames

(Cont. on following page)

THIS IS HOW THE GREATER BERLIN DISTRICT LOOKED FROM THE FLYING FORTRESSES AND LIBERATORS OF THE U.S. EIGHTH AIR FORCE as they roared over the German capital during the all-out daylight raid on March 6. Huge formations of enemy fighters attacked the bombers. Fortresses and Liberators destroyed ninety-three, while the Allied fighter escort accounted for another eighty-three, bringing the total "Luftwaffe" losses up to at least 176

BOMBS FROM THE AMERICAN FORTRESSES AND LIBERATORS head for an industrial target in one of the suburbs of Berlin

BERLIN BY DAYLIGHT (Continued) As Seen by the American Bombers During the Great Raid on March 6



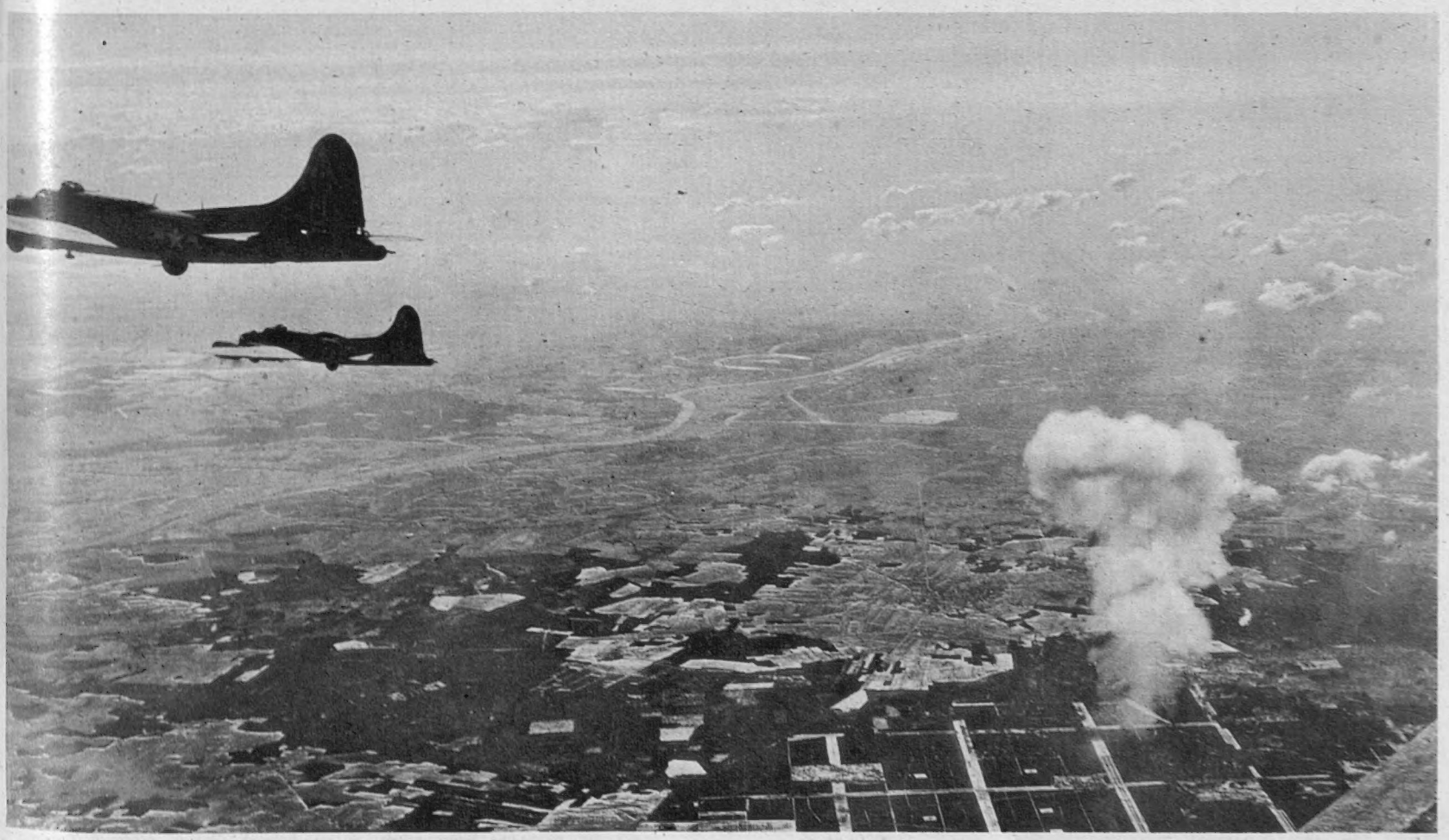
FOR THE SECOND TIME IN THREE DAYS, American bombs wing their way down on the outlying factory area to the south-west of Berlin

(Cont. from preceding page)

spreading over the targets. German fighters met the bombers some time before they reached Berlin, attacked them during the actual bombing of the city area and again for forty minutes on their way out. It is now known that, in all, 176 Nazis were shot down—ninety-three by the heavy bombers and eighty-three by the escorting fighters. Nearly fifty were shot down in the vicinity of Berlin itself. The cost to the Americans was sixty-eight bombers, seven of which landed in Sweden, and eleven fighters.

It is thought that 1,500 American aircraft took part in the great assault, and that between 1,500 and 2,000 tons of bombs were dropped.

THE DAYLIGHT SKY OVER THE GERMAN CAPITAL IS FILLED WITH AMERICAN HEAVY BOMBERS. The black patches amongst the lighter banks of cloud are flak-bursts from the German anti-aircraft batteries. As usual, the Americans flew in their strongly defensive tight formations: they had to engage and fight off hundreds of fighters who came up to the attack



A TRAGEDY OF THE AIR. While the big American bombers (on left) roar on, a huge cloud of smoke towards the right of the picture indicates all that remains of a Flying Fortress which received a direct hit from flak and exploded over the suburbs of Berlin during the large-scale daylight operations carried out over the German capital on March 6—one of a series of heavy assaults by air

A LITTLE MORE CONSIDERATION FOR CIVILIANS

The Ordinary Man is Badgered and Restricted to an Inordinate Extent—and Quite Unnecessarily. This is a Plea for the Lifting of Stupid and Annoying Regulations

By FERDINAND TUOHY

IN the summer of 1942 I wrote an article asking why I couldn't get in for a bathe on the South Coast, when, westward along the coast, practically as close to the Hun, I could swim and swim.

I was answered with a select, abusive fan mail. The strait facts were ignored, but—who did I think I was, a civilian, wanting to enjoy myself when our brave boys, etc.? I failed utterly to see the connection with our brave boys, many of whom were getting into the sea, on the South Coast and wondering why civilians couldn't do likewise. Still, I had evidently jarred on patriotic nerves, so I returned to my civilian corner, feeling slightly whipped, as we civilians do when we provoke patriotic censure.

And there I stayed for a full year until provoked, in my turn, by a lofty pronouncement of Lord Woolton's. I sent a letter to the Press, suggesting that the Noble Lord was going a bit far with his "They 've got what they asked for," in reference to a few hundred war-workers left huddled with their families for days and nights on the quayside at Fleetwood because they had wanted a few days holiday after years of grind.

My letter was not printed.

If I now return to the joust, it is because I have been respectably forestalled by a leading Conservative journal, which has invited Lord Leathers and Mr. Noel-Baker to think over "the social and even military necessity" of the harassed people in south-east England, at least, being allowed travel facilities to get some "leave" during this sixth summer. Note the word "leave," not "holiday," since it cleaves to the root of the matter.

In total war nearly all are conscripted in some form. One lot is booked to carry through the fighting; a second lot, to produce the wherewithal or to hold the fort generally; and the Forces will be the first to admit that here at home strain and deprivation have scarcely hit them the harder.

At first sight the suggestion that more civilians should get a break, away from home, during this, of all summers, may sound an impossible proposition, even indecent, certainly irresponsible. Every engine puff will be needed to move men and material, stores and munitions in this island over-crowded with khaki and blue shadings. Far from additional civilian mobility, it would not be surprising if whole regions were subjected to civil standstill.

Assuredly in those parts of England most affected by Second Front operations the prospect of any travel "let up" appears to be pretty thin. Yet it is hard to escape the feeling that the virtual stopper on civilian travel as the war drags on has been affixed in too total and easy a manner, as if there can be no case at all for the slightest questioning. A strong case can be stated on health and man-hour grounds, since it is clear that a deal of absenteeism and lack of vigour derives from inability to get away from home and place of work. Holidays at home, however inventive and well-meaning, are a pale palliative, nothing more. *The Observer* goes so far as to bring the Forces into the argument.

"It is a simple truth that Service men and women stationed in the north and west may be having an easier life than a civilian with a busy life, family burdens, frequent loss of sleep and calls to fire-fighting. Such men and women are in a front line of danger and effort, and their welfare is really a part of 'military necessity.' For them to have proper leave this year is not only just; it is essential."

Behind this is the complaint, recurrently voiced, that the Forces have four separate leaves annually. The latest to broach the matter is Sir Herbert Williams, who asked the House: "Whether something could not be done to cut down long journeys by 85 per cent. of the people making them at the Government's expense." Having been called a Fifth Columnist for wanting to go into the sea, so far as I am concerned, Sir Herbert proceeds alone with his argument. Yet his intervention is a further indication of how the wind is lapping.

Lord Leathers's adamantine attitude time after time may be justified to the hilt so far as extra trains are concerned. But one has an uneasy feeling that his approach has all along been too purely negative; that he has never really gone all-out to manipulate more travel for war-workers and civilians by having recourse to this combination, to that piece of switching over. One may perhaps be permitted the suspicion that the very resignation of civilians, the fact that they have only to be told that it is for the war effort, for them to accept anything without demur, this steady, disciplined acceptance may in the long run have tempted the powers-that-be to assert themselves beyond the strict necessities of the case.

In particular, is adequate check kept on the rulings of local bodies, some of which appear to imagine that the more they yap about "all for the fighting men," and issue prohibiting ukases, the more they themselves figure as patriots? Let me give an instance. At this coast town it used to be possible to take a bus several miles out on Sunday mornings and walk home in time for lunch. Many made a day of it, their only outing in the week, to see friends and relatives. Then, early last year, on the score of saving fuel, all buses were stopped until 1 p.m. The result has been to keep people "grooved" and "browned off" in town. But the point is: if the stoppage was ever sound or yielding, don't we receive sufficient fuel now to restart kindred local services at week-ends?

It is by such manipulations that I believe something can be done to facilitate more civilian leave and release. If it be out of the question to put more trains on for civilians, or to comb out the current travelling company, there are the roads; there are buses, coaches, even lorries. Civilians will hardly query how they go so long as they can get away. If the fuel is available, the scant driving personnel might with advantage be brought back from the war-work to which it was directed.

But this above all: If new travel arrangements become feasible, on no account should they be broadcast. In the past we have drawn attention, like lunatics, to packed termini.

It is time officialdom got into the habit of showing a little more consideration for civilians over divers other matters, and that they took a little less advantage of the "all for the fighting men" tag, which comes along so easily for them. Civilians, as a whole, no longer have the buoyancy of 1940, and in places like London too much is taken for granted in their regard. Their patience and acquiescence are apt to be exploited. Hemmed in by all sorts of petty regulations, they barely protest. Victimised by rackets which could be stopped by forceful decrees, they fear to intrude their plight upon the war effort. Meekly, they watch their rations being reduced. All for the war! But is it?

At the risk of being howled down, I suggest that the Forces get more meat than is good for them, and civilians not enough to weather war conditions. William Bradford, of St. Anne's, will at least bear me out, for he has won a pension because his dyspepsia became chronic from too much meat and bacon while in the Army. "There 's always plenty—too much of it," he said. Of course, nothing is grudged the Forces, overfed or not, yet the fact remains that good foods become no longer available to war-workers on exacting jobs.

Cannot something better be done for old or ailing people? We must all have come up with distressing cases, and the general weakness is not improved by the absence of doctors. In a neighbouring town of 5,000 there is one doctor, and I am told the circumstance is not unusual. Yet droves of doctors have been buried away in the Services all these relatively casualty-less years, lots of them just filling up forms for robust personnel. And it is the same with oculists and dentists. All swept up by a gargantuan hand.

I trust we never get too Eskimo-y with the old—as when a recent Budget stopped old-age pensioners getting their baccy and beer.

And while on the subject, I detect a distinct aroma of "pussyfootism" in the way control of liquor is refused, and in the meagre brews on sale to the public. The plea that the cereals, etc., must go to feed additional livestock hardly stands up, in view of the oft-proven nutritive and restorative properties of beer and liquor, especially in this climate. And wherever our battles have been won, it hasn't been in temperance halls.

I will not detain you with the antics of the Sunday gloomsters beyond saying that they represent another gratuitous imposition on the vast majority of civilians, who are made to moon around the streets, to the incredulity of our visitors from overseas.

Wartime could be made so much more cheering for civilians (and Forces!) without the war effort suffering a jot, if the Executive acted centrally in respect of "improving" busybodies, who take it upon themselves to ban dances and reunions—anything showing the faintest likelihood of growing festive. The limit being reached when sizable towns are entirely bereft of cinemas on Sundays because owners won't stump up charity sums fixed by local bodies!

Yet I don't want this to develop into a litany of complaints, lest Goebbels should get the idea that the British Home Front has at last come out in revolt. I trust that I have made my central point clear, and that we understand one another. I think it is short-sighted policy in the light of the war effort and nothing else, not to show the last ounce of consideration for civilians at this late stage, the last ounce consonant with no genuine interference with making war.

Coming on top of the relief accorded by P.A.Y.E., better allowances for soldiers' dependants would only be what a multitude of civilians merit. It could be of good augury.

THREE NEW JUDGES APPOINTED FOR DIVORCE: The appointment has just been announced of three new Judges to the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court. They are appointed under the recently passed Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Bill, which enables contested divorce cases to be heard in the larger Assizes towns. They are pictured above after being sworn in. From left to right: Mr. Alfred Thompson Denning, K.C., Mr. Hubert Joseph Wallington, K.C., and Mr. Henry William Barnard, K.C. Mr. Justice Wallington is a Roman Catholic—the only Catholic at present on the Bench—and in view of the rigid Catholic objections to divorce, his appointment is unusually interesting

WAAFS TRY THEIR HAND AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT: An experiment in "on the spot" education for the Forces is being made at Southgate. Thirty W.A.A.F. officers and other ranks, in session each day from 9.30 to 5 p.m., are hearing talks on Southgate's local government, town planning, maternity and child welfare, finance, public health and education. Senior officers of the Borough Council, Alderman George Peverette, who is Director of Studies in this scheme, and a councillor who is also a member of the Middlesex County Council, are co-operating. A W.A.A.F. officer is seen asking a question during a lecture by Alderman George Peverette

NEW PICTURES from the RUSSIAN FRONT

THE RED ARMY ADVANCING ACROSS THE NARVA RIVER, south of the town of that name. The river is frozen over, affording a firm surface for men and equipment: much of the latter was taken across on sleds

THE WAR ON SKIS: With both gunners and mortars mounted thus, the advance can go forward swiftly

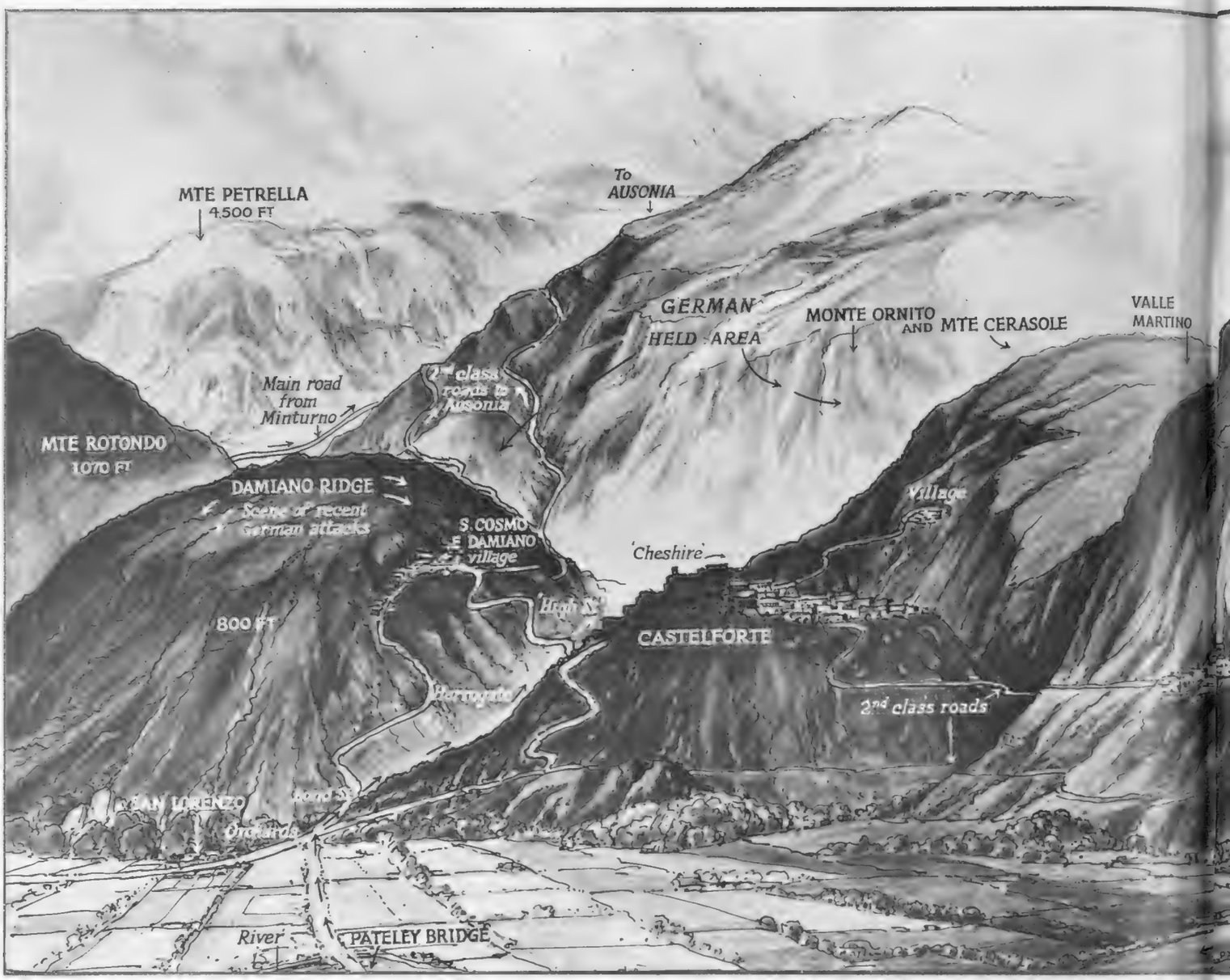
Not the men alone, but the weapons also move on skis. This picture shows an anti-tank rifle crew taking up position

THE ADVANCE ON PSKOV: Swift-moving, motorised air-sleighs, which carried Red Army shock troops across the frozen marshlands during an attack on the German positions. The soldiers are wearing their winter camouflage

THE ROAD TO PSKOV, with a woman traffic controller aiding the advance. The sign on the right indicates the direction towards the enemy's front line

THE SOVIET SUPREME COMMANDERS INSPECT A GIANT GERMAN GUN: Four members of the Supreme Command are here seen in Moscow studying the huge outlines of a heavy siege mortar captured from the retreating Germans. The gun is believed to be either a 240- or 305-mm. piece. From left to right are Admiral Kuznetzow (Navy Chief), Marshal Voronov, Marshal Zhukov and Marshal Voroshilov (Army Chiefs)

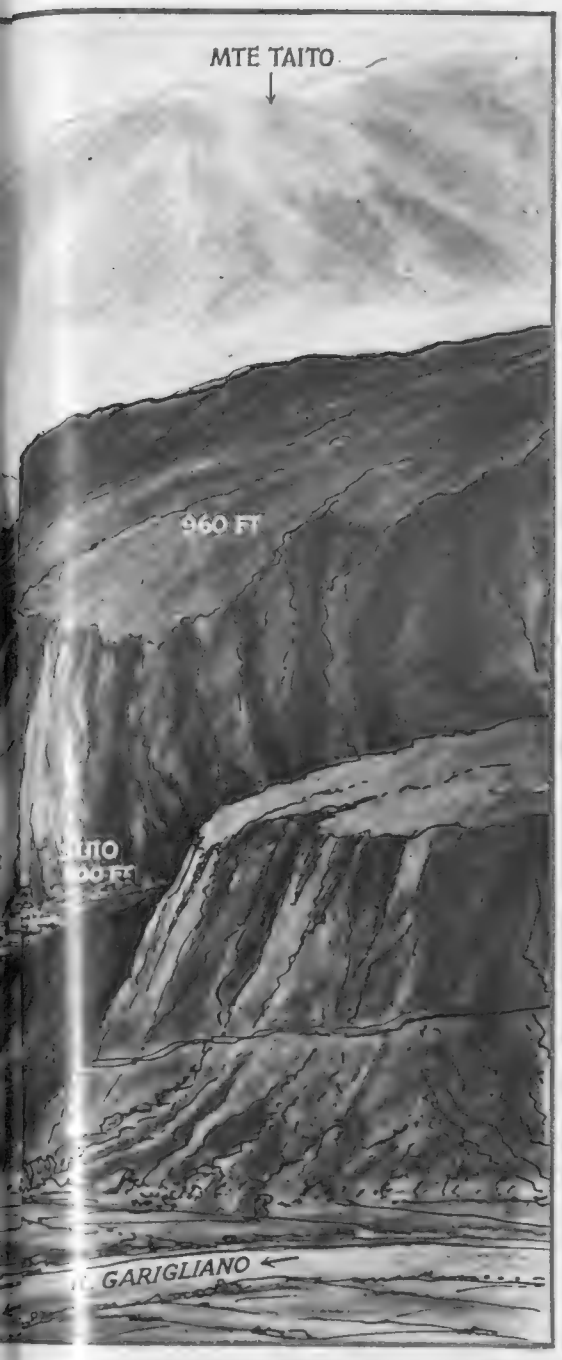
THE POLISH "PATRIOTS" WHO ARE FIGHTING WITH THE RED ARMY: The woman is Wanda Wassilewska, President of the Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow: with her is Colonel Berling, Commander of the Polish Kosciusko Division, which is fighting at the side of the Red Army. Both addressed their compatriots after a ceremony at which the Poles took an oath of allegiance to the Soviet forces



ON THE MAIN FIGHTING LINE IN ITALY: WHERE THE FIFTH ARMY HAVE BEEN HEAVILY ENGAGED WITH THE GERMANS ON THE GARIGLIANO FRONT, and where the enemy have made six attempts to recapture their lost mountain positions north of Castelforte. This drawing shows the route to the battle area up the hill-slopes from "Pateley Bridge" to "Cheshire"—*Drawing by Percy Home* (See notes below)

AFTER EXTENSIVE DEMOLITIONS BY THE GERMANS: THE RAILWAY TRACKS HAVE BEEN CUT UP INTO SECTIONS AND HEAVILY MINED IN PLACES, so that the U.S. engineers have to uproot them bodily with the aid of powerful bulldozers—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

At many places in the plains along the Garigliano front the Allied troops have had peculiar difficulties of mining to contend with. The railway track was first ripped up by the Germans with the aid of special machines, and then it was thickly sown with land mines. Detectors proved useless on such occasions, as they were attracted equally by the metals of the rails. In the end, the steel sections had to be torn up bodily by the infantry, with assistance from big American bulldozers. A painful half-mile was made in this way and the Gari, principal tributary of the Rapido River, was bridged and Cassino railway station was reached and occupied



THE MAINLAND BATTLE-LINE IN ITALY

The Fighting on the Garigliano Front depicted in Special Drawings by *Sphere* Artists

Six recent counter-attacks were made by the Germans within a short space of time in the endeavour to re-establish themselves on the Mte. Ornito and Mte. Cerasole mountain positions north of Castelforte. These, naturally, kept this front rather busier than the day-to-day communiqués would seem to have indicated. The fighting has been of a strenuous character. In the drawing above, the route towards this hotly-contested area is shown leading towards the foothills from "Pateley Bridge," one of the military transport bridges across the Garigliano. Furse-lands and coppices lie on both sides of this road.

The route leaves the village of S. Lorenzo on the left, passing through orchards by way of "Bond Street," another local name. From here the track to the fighting area ascends continuously. It gets muddier and more difficult as the soldiers struggle through "Harrogate" to the rockier going of "High Street." Thence they pant up the mountain-slopes to "Cheshire," and there they are—in the region of H.Q., with the fighting close at hand. Mte. Ornito and Mte. Cerasole rise forbiddingly in front. It is an area of ravines and gullies; it has been a difficult task getting supplies and reinforcements to the actual summit regions, where the enemy have been met in hand-to-hand struggles.

The setting of this local effort by the enemy is bounded on the left by the height on which the village of S. Cosmo e Damiano stands, and by Mte. Rotondo (1,070 ft); and by Castelforte and a batch of hills on the right. A fair road runs up to Castelforte. Two second-class roads run northwards, one of them through Saio hill village. Two others lead over the mountains to Ausonia and the "Road to Rome" valley.

Damiano Ridge, on the left, has also been the scene of enemy attacks in an attempt to dominate Castelforte, but these were successfully repelled

NORTH OF THE GARIGLIANO: ONE OF THE APPROACHES TO AN ALLIED POSITION. As the drawing on the left indicates, the road up to Monte Ornito has been well surveyed, and English place-names have made their appearance all up the hill-side—from "Pateley Bridge" to "Cheshire," where Brigade Headquarters are established. This photograph was taken at a road junction: it not only indicates the location of some of the places, but also gives a good idea of the general roughness of the mule-tracks which here pass for roads

A PATHETIC MOMENT ON THE ITALIAN FRONT: A dog seeks his lost master—*Drawing by Edward Osmond*

One of the minor, but by no means less poignant, tragedies of the war has been the sudden bereavement which may befall the pet animal of a household. It has occurred both from air raids and from the bombardment of towns the armies have advanced through. In the case recorded here by Mr. Edward Osmond, the dog has returned home, only to find it half-battered down by shell-fire. The owner and his family have fled to some place of shelter from the advancing guns. Titbits of food will not distract him. Surely the door will soon open and all will be well!

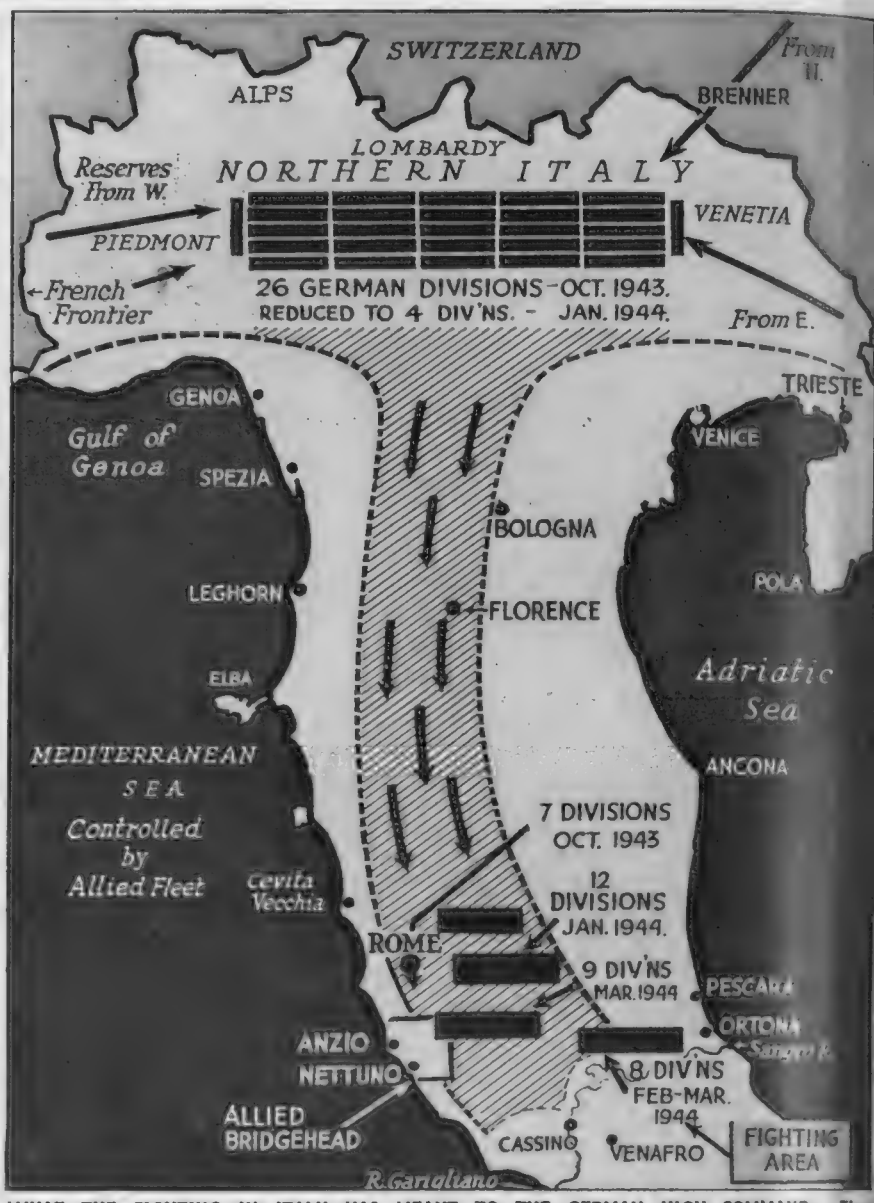
The FIGHTING in the BEACHHEAD

After the Great German Assaults at Anzio had been Repulsed by the Men of the Fifth Army

In October 1943, the Germans in Italy had a total of twenty-six divisions concentrated to the north of Rome. These had been gathered from many quarters after the surrender of Italy. Only seven of them were fighting south of the capital. But by the middle of January, twelve German divisions had been sent to the southern front, to hold up the Allies after the series of successful river crossings which indicated our determination to advance on Rome. When the landings at Anzio were made, Kesselring had to make further dispositions: the result is that, to-day, out of the former twenty-six divisions, only four remain as a strategic reserve.

According to the American Secretary for War, Mr. Stimson, the German battle order is: in the south—on the Garigliano, at Cassino and in the Adriatic sector—there is a total of eight German divisions; in the Anzio region, there are another nine divisions; to the north of Rome, there are about four divisions, with reinforcements from Southern France probably en route.

BRINGING IN THE WOUNDED: A party of Indian stretcher-bearers carry a badly-wounded soldier over a difficult tract of country where motor-vehicles cannot operate. Four men go to a stretcher, each supporting one corner on a shoulder



WHAT THE FIGHTING IN ITALY HAS MEANT TO THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND: The reserve of twenty-six German divisions in the north has now been reduced to four divisions, with seventeen divisions actively engaged south of Rome

HOW THE WOUNDED WITHIN THE ANZIO BEACHHEAD ARE CARED FOR: Many parts of the area are under shell-fire from the enemy: inside the medical tents, therefore, the ground is dug out, so that each patient enjoys adequate protection from blast. Above their heads is a canvas roof to keep off the heavy rains, whilst an earthwork revetment around the trenches shelters them from the biting winds. The medical officers descend into the narrow slits to give individual attention to their patients

THE SUPPORT OF THE ARTILLERY ARM AT ANZIO: THE MASSED FIRE FROM THE ALLIED GUNS which stopped the German attacks within the beachhead. The scene by night when the gun-flashes lit up the country-side as if in daylight—*Drawing by H. P. Burton*

A major factor in the repelling of the massed attacks of the Germans upon the Anzio perimeter was the concentration of gun-fire which it had been possible to project along a wide stretch of front. Nearly every narrative, official or otherwise, has testified to the efficacy of this great weight of fire-power. It may have been a wave of lorry-borne troops; or troops and tanks advancing together (men have been seen clustered in groups on the backs of tanks); or a foray of armour alone: all have been brought to a standstill and final retreat by the assistance of the artillery arm. The guns have roared out in great semi-circles of fire by day and by night; and it is a testimony to the indefatigable effort of the Navy in landing the artillery and the tens of thousands of shells which this display of power entailed. The scene at night has been impressive in the extreme as the guns flashed out. The surrounding country has been lit up as if by daylight; and there must have been much wear and tear on the gun-barrels during these nightly displays

THE PERSISTENT TYPE OF FIGHTING ALL ROUND THE BEACHHEAD PERIMETER. AFTER THE BIG GERMAN ASSAULTS HAD FAILED, constant patrols led to guerilla clashes at many points, in which tanks and infantry played a considerable part—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

When the major thrusts of the German divisions died down, it did not mean that all fighting ceased. There is one type of warfare which is being carried on day after day—a kind of super-guerilla warfare. It goes on throughout the day or the night, or both, according to weather or other factors. It takes place among wooded ravines, bramble-entwined thickets, around farmsteads, and in and out of little gullies, mostly wet and slippery with mud after the recent rain spells. Raiding party stalks raiding party in such varied country that new situations are constantly arising. In such close country, where two forces are almost interlocked and occupation of a hump of ground gives one side the advantage of observation, the supplying of forward troops has to be done by parties prepared to fight their way through ambushes, often in hand-to-hand combat

"BOXES" AND "BUNKERS" IN THE ARAKAN JUNGLE. **THE "BUNKERS" WERE CONSTRUCTED BY THE JAPANESE AS STRONG-POINTS, each supporting the other: by encircling these with wire unknown to the Japs, the Allied forces were able to annihilate both strong-point and defenders before the latter could slip away. The "boxes" were defensive positions erected by the Allied troops on the Mayu Ridge.** *(See notes below)*—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

ON THE ARAKAN FRONT. The severe fighting against the considerable Japanese forces in this area resulted in a victory for the British and Indian troops of the Fourteenth Army in Burma. The Japanese attempt to encircle the 7th Indian Division from the rear was frustrated after days of heavy fighting, during the course of which supplies for the entire Division were dropped by plane—a record for supply from the air. This picture shows a mule-train being prepared for a journey up to a front-line area. Having reached a river too deep for negotiation without damage to the supplies they carry, the mules are unloaded so that their packs can be ferried across. The task of keeping the troops at the front fully supplied is a Herculean one. Supplies are transported over jungle paths in lorries; packed on mules along tracks impossible for any other form of transport; and ferried up rivers by native craft

The tense struggle which has recently been taking place between Japanese forces operating from the direction of Buthidaung against the British and Indian columns in the Mayu Ridge area has been characterised by some very strange jungle features. Although the forest trees in some areas are tall and straight there is a dense undergrowth which enables troops familiar with jungle work to remain unseen both in attack and defence.

Although the recent thrust by the Japanese was mainly an offensive movement against our lines of communication, the enemy had constructed a number of forest bunkers, so placed that their fire could support one another against advancing troops. Gradually the position of these strong-points was located, and the nature of the undergrowth enabled the British and Indian troops to surround these positions with a circle of barbed wire—the operation being conducted at no great distance from the enemy, but out of his sight. When the Japanese force holding a number of forest bunkers was thus enclosed the attack could begin, and the enemy would find that his usual method of melting away by twos and threes was no longer possible.

The severity of the first Japanese onrush compelled our troops also to adopt forest defence measures. When the Japanese thrusts broke through into the general area held on the eastern slopes of the Mayu Ridge, the troops held their ground and formed what were known as "defensive boxes." These were roughly circular in shape, and within the perimeter the defence was organised with guns, tanks, and mortars arranged so that an enemy attack could be met from whatever quarter it came.

On right—**DROPPING SUPPLIES TO THE 7TH DIVISION, which was cut off during the Arakan fighting. The planes are American Dakotas: the bombing planes in the background are Mitchells**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

Big carrier-planes flying over the Burmese jungles from their bases in the west gave timely and effective aid to the beleaguered British and Indian troops when their lines of communication during the forward thrust of the Japanese from Buthidaung and Taung's Bazar were cut. The task of these planes was to spot the positions held by the beleaguered forces and then to drop their supplies by small parachute in such a way that they could be rapidly gathered in by the troops who were anxiously awaiting the contents of these dangling sacks from the air.

Flying over this dense jungle country, the pilot sees below him mile after mile of unbroken tree-tops forming a mass of dark-green vegetation. Only here and there is a clearance visible, where a grassy patch with some bush growth breaks the monotony of the forest. To be forced down in such country has special difficulties and dangers for pilots and crews. In order that they may have a chance of feeding themselves if engine failure or other reason brings them down, the planes now carry fishing tackle, which should prove of great use if a stream can be reached.

The FIGHTING in the BURMESE JUNGLES: Scenes during the Campaign Against the Japs on the Arakan Front Depicted by "Sphere" Artists

A SCENE IN THE CHIN HILLS: Wounded being brought down on jeeps through the dank, moss-grown jungle—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

Not many weeks ago a jeep track did not exist through these densely-wooded regions: so the sappers carved a path for them. The jeep now carries everything—ammunition, food, water—as well as serving as tractors for the big guns, and ambulances for the wounded! When used in the latter capacity, racks to hold stretchers (specially designed by the Medical Officer) are installed; and over any rough stretches of road the jeeps crawl at less than walking pace to reduce the jolts. The course pursued by the track is startling in its variety. Teak forests no denser than an English wood are succeeded by thicker bush, spangled here and there with crimson rhododendrons. Then, rounding a spur of the mountain, one is suddenly driving shelterless under a burning sun. No sooner has one unbuttoned tunic and loosened the shirt than the jeep takes another turn, plunging into a dark and icy cavern. One reaches for one's greatcoat. The orchid-clad trees are densely foliaged and festooned with a tangle of creepers as thick as a ship's hawser. The sun never breaks through it. The trees are continuously adrip with moisture. The jeep track is a permanent slough of mud

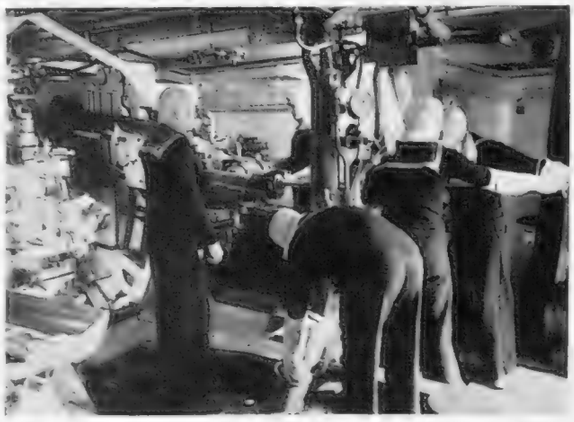
THE NAVY'S LITTLE SHIPS

And Another Epic Story of the British Merchant Service—*Drawings by Sphere Artists*

"The dangerous task of the trawlers is an essential work carried on without cease and in obscurity." In such terms did the official *Summary of Naval Warfare* in 1943 characterise the work of the trawlers. It is pleasant here to be able to tell of the work of one such ship, whose record has recently been made public. The vessel is H.M.S. *Imperialist*, which played a part in the recent drawn-out struggle with U-boats in the Straits of Gibraltar.

Describing *Imperialist's* role in this action, her Commanding Officer (Lieut.-Com. B. H. Craig Rodgers, R.N.V.R.) gave a vivid description of an encounter with one of the enemy vessels attempting to enter the Mediterranean from the Atlantic. "Immediately we sighted the submarine," he said, "I brought our guns to bear and we opened up with all we had. At this time there was not a sign of life aboard the U-boat; the Germans must have been trapped inside. The first salvo from our 4-in. gun crippled the enemy's forward gun. The *Imperialist's* smaller armament then must have scored nearly 100 hits. Then, still apparently quite lifeless, she submerged or sank, so we proceeded over the U-boat position and dropped some more depth-charges — about four tons in all."

The incident is illustrated by THE SPHERE'S naval artist, Mr. Montague Dawson, in the drawing which is here reproduced on the right.



IN THE TURRET OF A BRITISH CRUISER: The crew of a 6-in. gun on board H.M.S. "Jamaica," 8,000-ton cruiser of the Mauritius class and one of our most modern warships

Below—This 6,000-ton merchant ship, on fire, was brought into a British port from the scene of a battle more than 1,000 miles out in the Atlantic, by a twenty-nine-year-old second mate, who took over command after the captain had been killed by a glider-bomb which struck the ship. (The first officer had died during the voyage.) The *Delius* was homeward bound from India with 8,000 tons of cotton and peanuts on board. After enemy reconnaissance planes had shadowed the convoy, a heavy air attack was launched by glider-bomb planes. A Heinkel 111, three miles away from the convoy and flying at 2,000 ft., released a glider-bomb, which curved down towards the ships, then banked steeply and struck the *Delius*. The captain and a look-out who were standing on the bridge were killed instantly. The bridge and a large area of the forepart of the ship were wrecked. Fire broke out in the hold below, and the bulkhead of the engine-room, which was next to the hold, grew red-hot. Second Officer Marshall took over command. As his crew grappled with the fire, he signalled a corvette which was picking up survivors from another bombed ship. Eventually, the corvette was able to send over a doctor to attend to the casualties. In appalling weather, the convoy ploughed on after the fight. For twenty-four hours, while the crew battled to keep the fire under control and to repair the steering machinery, the *Delius* dropped astern. But later she caught up with the convoy and remained with it until the United Kingdom was reached.

ANOTHER EPIC OF THE MERCHANT NAVY: THE M.V. "DELIUS" ON FIRE DURING A 1,000-MILE VOYAGE HOMEWARD, with the crew fighting the flames all the way and in bad weather. The "Delius," which had dropped behind the convoy, caught up with it and returned to the United Kingdom. In the drawing she is seen still in convoy, and with fire-parties keeping down the flames, while a corvette is standing in close, preparing to take off the wounded

—Drawing by Wm. McDowell

THE DANGEROUS TASKS OF THE NAVAL TRAWLERS. H.M.S. "IMPERIALIST," DURING THE RECENT PROLONGED BATTLE WITH U-BOATS IN THE STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR, engages an enemy submarine and forces it below the surface. (The action is described in the notes published on the left)—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

A SCENE OF PANIC AS A BRITISH SUBMARINE ATTACKED TWO GERMAN ANTI-SUBMARINE CRAFT escorting an ammunition convoy—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

Italic seized two German anti-submarine craft, escorting a convoy of ammunition ships off the French Riviera, when a British submarine made a successful torpedo attack. The escorts fired every weapon they had, including their A.-A. guns. "The attack was carried out close inshore, during a stormy afternoon," said the submarine's commanding officer. "We approached, submerged and fired a torpedo at one of the two ammunition vessels. It was seen to hit the target, which blew up and disappeared. I then fired a torpedo at the other ship. This missed close astern, but it stirred the escorts from their task of searching for survivors, and they came towards us as though they really meant business. When they were about 500 yards away, a shattering row started, and I could now see the enemy ships zigzagging about in panic, firing every available weapon into the sea close around them. The anti-aircraft shells made quite a loud bang as they hit the water, and this pandemonium went on for about 10 minutes. Having made their gesture, the escorts retired close to the target, which had beached herself. They were just in time to come under a fusillade of bursting shells which went up as my third torpedo hit the remaining ship just forward of the engine-room. When it was over, I could see the target with her back broken. When I took a last look at the escorts, they had given up the unequal struggle and tucked their heads into the beach." In the above drawing, the torpedoed ammunition ship is seen blowing up. In the foreground is one of the German M.T.B.s, or *Schnellboote*, firing every available gun at the sea in panic, while a larger sloop behind does the same

STORING UP THE INVASION SUPPLIES

Planes, Guns, Tanks and Shells Come Pouring into Britain Ready for the Big Days Ahead

DURING H.M.S. "TRUMPETER'S" CROSSING—Aircraft alarm starboard, and the A.-A. guns are manned ready for the threatened attack by German aircraft

When the invasion of the Continent opens, the need for guns and more guns—and, indeed, war equipment of every kind—will be great and urgent. In preparation for the day, therefore, these arms are being piled up at a great rate in special ordnance dumps throughout the country, as the merchantmen and aircraft-carriers bring them into the ports. The escort-carrier *Trumpeter* has taken a hand in this work, and recently she brought in a consignment of Mustang fighter aircraft

ON BOARD THE ESCORT-CARRIER "TRUMPETER" during a recent North Atlantic crossing laden with aircraft for the coming Second Front. Heavy weather was encountered, with mountainous seas, but the Carrier was able to bring her precious cargo safely into port. Later, the Mustangs she carried were sent on to "Invasion City" for final preparation

RANKS OF P-51 MUSTANG FIGHTERS LINED UP ON THE DECK OF H.M.S. "TRUMPETER" during a recent North Atlantic crossing by the escort-carrier. These powerful and manœuvrable aircraft have been brought over in readiness for the coming invasion of the Continent: they will be "readied" for action at American air stations in Britain

Below—8-IN. HOWITZER SHELLS stacked in readiness at "Invasion City," whence they will be distributed to American units in the field

ANOTHER IMPRESSIVE CORNER AT AN AMERICAN ORDNANCE DEPOT. Stacks of 1,000-lb. bombs being stored after their arrival in Britain from the United States

Other vessels have brought in guns, tanks, bombs, ambulances, half-tracks, lorries and vehicles of every description. These are now being got ready for the Second Front by hundreds of soldier-technicians, who are working at top speed to facilitate quick deliveries of the equipment to units in the field. Aircraft, too, are coming in at a good rate and being handled both by the American Air Forces here and by the R.A.F. The pictures reproduced on these pages were taken during the cross-Atlantic voyage of H.M.S. *Trumpeter* and at "Invasion City" in Britain

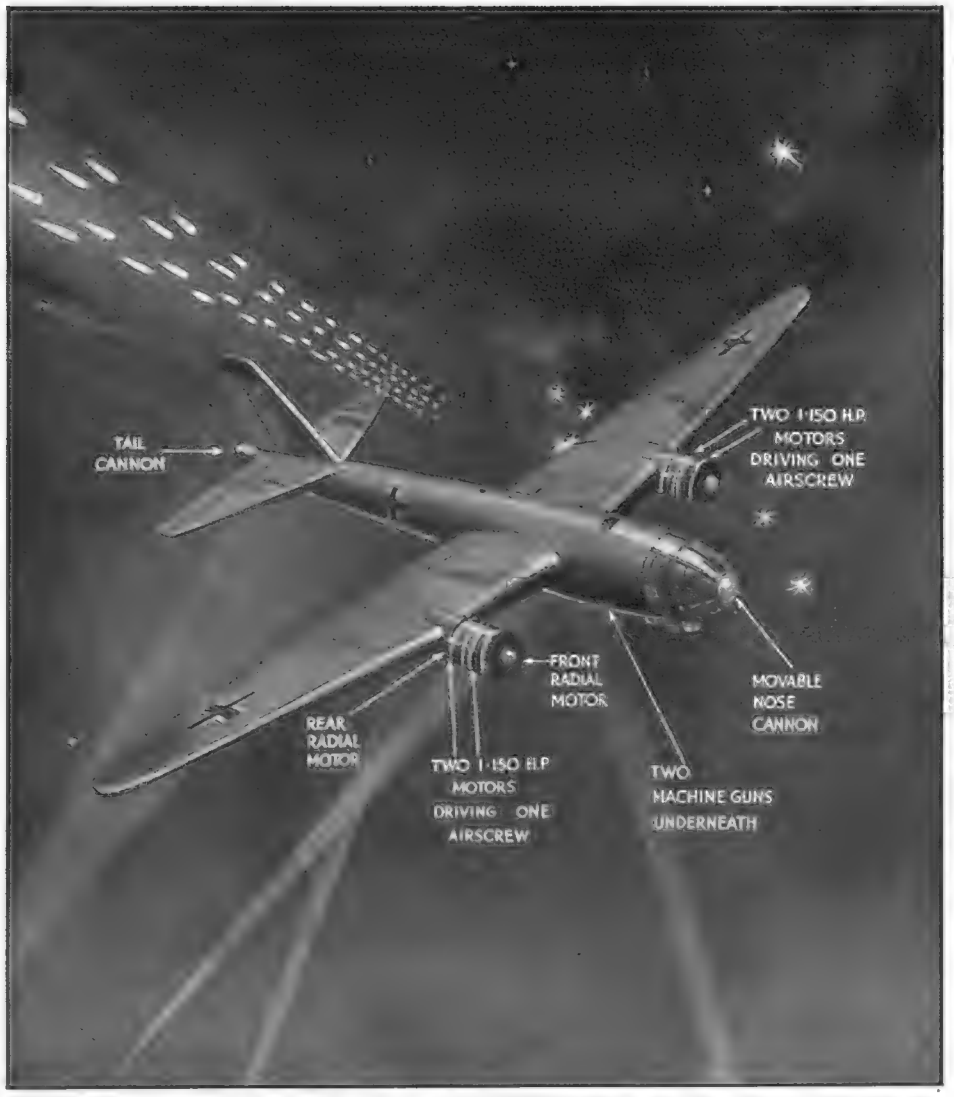
A LINE OF LIGHTNING AIRCRAFT READY FOR THE FINAL ASSEMBLY. These are the long-range fighters which protect the American bomber formations on their daylight raids over Germany. More and more of them are arriving in this country from the U.S.

NEWLY-ARRIVED PLANES BEING TRANSPORTED THROUGH THE STREETS TO THEIR DESTINATION. Special trucks are used for this work, and great skill is needed by the R.A.F. drivers because in many places there is only just enough room for the planes to get through the streets

AMERICAN SOLDIER-TECHNICIANS AT WORK ON A 105-MM. HOWITZER GUN. Like all the equipment at this depot, this weapon has only just arrived by sea from the United States

STACKING TOMMY-GUNS against the time when the infantry will be demanding these valuable implements of war for operations against the Germans when the Second Front opens

A LINE OF ANTI-TANK GUNS LYING OUT IN THE OPEN, but protected against the English weather. These fine weapons which are accumulating at a great rate may soon be employed against the Germans in Europe

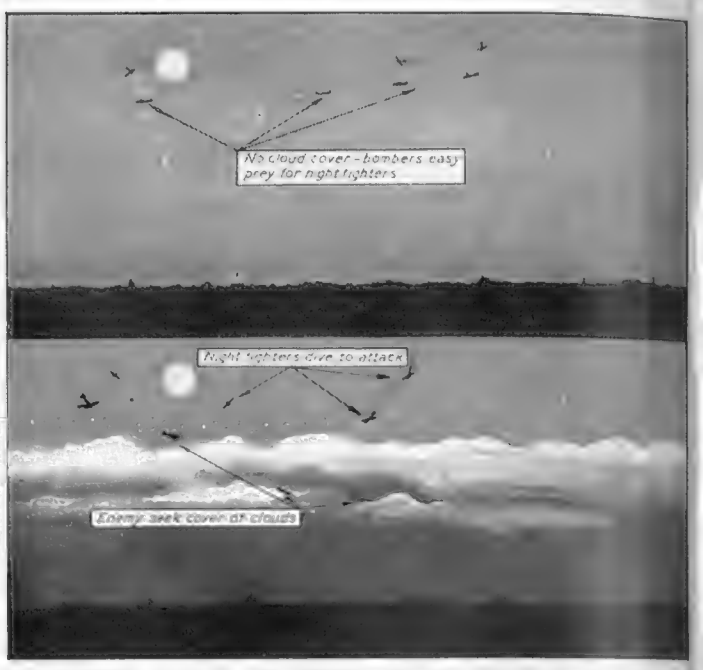


THE NEW GERMAN NIGHT BOMBER, THE HEINKEL 177, with which the enemy are claiming to be raiding London. This aircraft has four engines, but only two propellers: the engines are coupled in pairs as shown above. The crew varies from six to eight men
—*Drawing by Roland Davies* (See notes at right)

A "GIGANTIC MONSTROSITY," WHICH THE GERMANS HAVE CREATED OUT OF TWO AIRCRAFT. This five-engined plane is probably two Heinkel 111's locked together, with another engine added. One was shot down recently over France by a Mosquito pilot whilst it was towing two gliders—*Drawing by Roland Davies* (See notes at right above)

THE RETURN OF THE "LUFTWAFFE"

And Some of the Types of Aircraft which They are Now Employing — *Special Sphere Drawings*



THE RENEWED ATTACKS ON LONDON—the part played by the weather. A full moon throws up the target, but also allows of better interception by night fighters. Cloud cover, with a moon above, offers the raiders better chances of escape

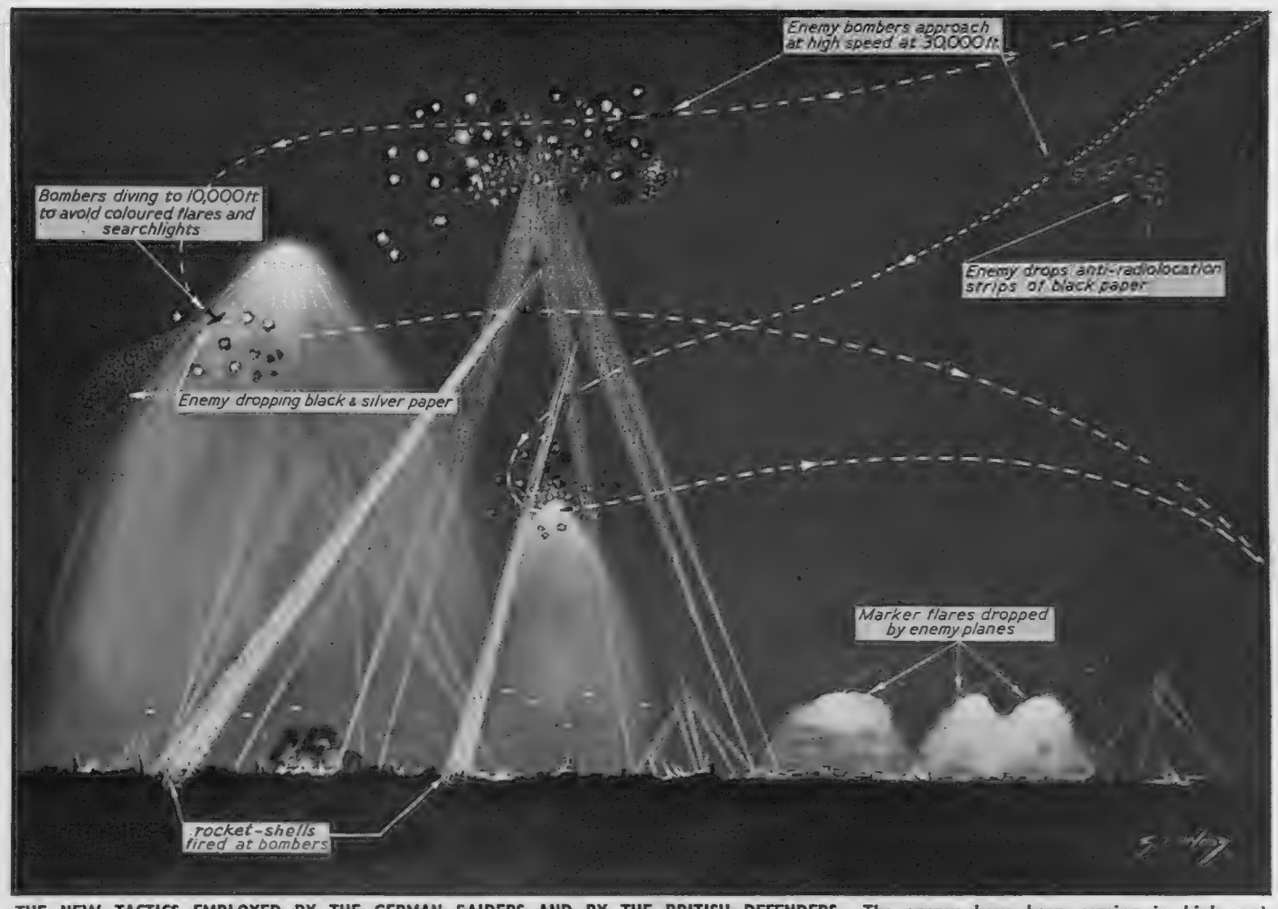
The Heinkel 177 shown on the left is Germany's largest and latest bomber: it is slightly bigger than a Lancaster, and is equipped with four engines coupled in pairs as shown. The He. 177 was used for the first time against England, in small numbers, in January last. It is equipped with cannon and machine-guns, carries a crew of six to eight, and has a maximum speed of 280 m.p.h. Its range, at cruising speed, is extraordinary—7,040 miles at 180 m.p.h. So far, the Germans have only a few squadrons of these bombers in service.

The second aircraft shown on the left has been described as a "gigantic monstrosity." The Germans say that it is a new bomber with twin fuselages which "looks like a Lightning fighter." It is thought in this country to be two Heinkel 111's locked together by a huge main plane and with a fifth engine added. It has two tails and two crew compartments. One of them was shot down over France a few days ago whilst towing two gliders. The pilots who took part in this exploit said that it was the biggest thing they had ever seen in the air.

HITTING THE "LUFTWAFFE" AT ONE OF ITS BASES IN HOLLAND: On February 24, for the first time, the German fighter and bomber base at Leeuwarden was attacked by B-26 Marauder bombers of the American Ninth Air Force in daylight. When this picture was taken a heavy concentration of bombs was exploding through a large dispersal area in which there were many aircraft shelters

The renewed raiding of London by German night bombers revealed several differences in technique as compared with the great blitz of 1940-41. In the attacks carried out last month, the raiders came in at greater heights than formerly—30,000 ft. was a height at which many aircraft operated during the approach to the capital. When over the outskirts they would drop to considerably lower levels—with the object of avoiding patches of flak higher up. A greater speed than formerly characterised most of the attacks, the ordinary speed of the aircraft being accelerated by a long and steady dive across London and back to their bases in France and Belgium. In this way they hoped to escape our night fighters; but a considerable number were, nevertheless, caught over the Channel.

Rocket shells were used against the Germans over London and its approaches: these soar into the sky with a rushing sound and burst into what looks like a firework display of flashing points. The enemy dropped large quantities of paper strips, silver and black, evidently with the idea of upsetting our radiolocation devices. They also showed a desire to copy our recent practice of using flares in "Pathfinder" fashion. On occasion, these were not followed by subsequent action—one example of several strange practices which have puzzled many onlookers.



THE NEW TACTICS EMPLOYED BY THE GERMAN RAIDERS AND BY THE BRITISH DEFENDERS. The enemy have been coming in high and diving down over the target at great speed: they have been dropping strips of silver-and-black paper to confuse the radiolocation devices, and numbers of marker flares. We have replied with rocket shells and other pyrotechnic displays—*Drawing by B. C. Wood*

THE BOMBING OF THE ENEMY'S LINES OF COMMUNICATION IN THE ALBANO AREA IN ITALY. This district includes the Pope's villa at Castel Gandolfo, and Frascati (former German headquarters), as well as a number of sixteenth-century villas—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

Allied aircraft, including some of our heavy four-engined bombers, have recently been paying particular attention to German traffic by road and rail in the area of Castel Gandolfo and Frascati. The Papal estate, which contains the Pope's summer villa, lies on the west side of Lake Albano, the biggest sheet of water inside the hill ring which forms the summit ridge of the old volcano. The buildings occupy a wooded knoll overlooking the lake. The main road from Velletri—the Via Appia—runs in the forefront of the drawing reproduced above: a side road runs round the wooded heights to reach Marino, Frascati and, ultimately, Rome. The railway pierces the hillside and finds its way through the wooded slopes of the Frascati district on its way to the capital. Frascati lies beyond Castel Gandolfo: it is famous for its cluster of wonderful villas built by the Italian nobility in the sixteenth century. They possess beautiful formal gardens with fine stairways and terraces, and abound in statuary

THE "RAFWAFFE," AND SOME OF THE ENEMY AIRCRAFT WHICH THEY FLY. All these planes have been captured from the Germans by the R.A.F.: from right to left they are—a Henschel 129 twin-engine fighter-bomber and ground-strafer; an F.W.190 fighter-bomber; a Messerschmitt 109G, the latest fighter-type; a Messerschmitt 109; a Messerschmitt 110 twin-engine fighter-bomber; and a Ju.88

THE WAR IN THE AIR

Some of the Newest Pictures of the Work of the Allied Air Forces at Home and Abroad

THIS JUNKERS 88 IS NOW OWNED BY THE R.A.F. and wears British roundels in place of the Swastika. This type is the standard twin-engined day or night bomber in use by the "Luftwaffe" in all theatres of war

AN ENEMY FLYING-BOAT IS DESTROYED: A Coastal Command Mosquito operated by a Norwegian squadron was within sight of the coast of Norway during a recent patrol, when it spotted a German B. and V. 138 flying-boat. This is a three-engined reconnaissance aircraft equipped with floats. The Mosquito closed in, and soon the flying-boat had been shot down in flames. The above picture was taken at the moment when the flying-boat sighted the Mosquito and began to head for the shore

THE LATEST TYPE OF GERMAN FIGHTER—THE MESSERSCHMITT 109G, now flown in this country with British markings. It was first used in action on the Russian front in the summer of 1942, and then in the North African campaign

A SPITFIRE WITH ITS NEW EXTENDED WING-TIPS. The world's finest fighter has undergone many modifications since the war began. This one has been introduced to render the aircraft more manœuvrable at high altitudes

A FOCKE-WULF 190 FIGHTER-BOMBER. This is the German machine which was designed to be an answer to our own Spitfire fighter

The queerest squadron in the R.A.F. consists of a group of crack pilots who fly genuine Nazi aircraft, all of which have been captured practically intact from the enemy. This "Air Circus," or "Rafwaffe," possess most of the types produced in Germany to-day. When they acquire a new plane it is sent to a special station for overhaul, and is then flown by British pilots. These men are thus able to give the Air Ministry a constant flow of information concerning capabilities and performance: they also tour R.A.F. stations and demonstrate to the various pilots the enemy's methods of attack, thus co-operating in the final stages of a British pilot's training. The squadron is under the control of Flight-Lieut. Lewenden

NIGHT-FIGHTERS AT "READINESS": Supper whilst awaiting the arrival of the enemy. A picture taken at a station which has been very successful against the recent Nazi raiders of London. The pilots are given a full allowance of milk and eggs, to keep them fit. Note the Mae Wests, which are always worn at "readiness"

PREPARING FOR THE COMING RAID: A W.A.A.F. armourer belting-up ammunition for the guns of a Lancaster bomber. The weight of bullets carried in each aircraft is very considerable, and is always taken into account when assessing the total load

AFTER A SERIES OF VISITS BY ALLIED BOMBERS—the airport at Capua, in Italy, as it is to-day. The whole of the landing area is dotted with craters, many of which were filled with rainwater when the picture was taken. The German planes and hangars were wrecked by bombing before the Allies captured the field. It is now used as a bivouac area well behind the fighting front for tanks, half-tracked vehicles and other types of British and American motorised equipment

THE R.A.F. IN ITALY USE WRECKED GERMAN PLANES AS WINDSCREENS. The airmen of a medium bomber squadron have found a good use for the wrecked enemy aircraft on their airfield. They set up their tents close to the derelict enemy machines so that these could take the full brunt of the terrific winds which have been blowing recently. Wood and metal from the aircraft were used to make the tents a little more weatherproof and comfortable, and many airmen have found ingenious uses for various parts of the wreckage

INTERNED IN EUROPE'S BEST INTERNMENT CAMP: English, Canadian and American pilots in one of the spacious rooms at Humlebacken. With them are Swedish girls and Captain Hedburg, of the Swedish Air Force, Chief of the Camp. Allied airmen who are forced to bale out, or whose aircraft crashes, over Sweden may curse the evil fortune which puts them out of the war for the duration. But in every other way they are lucky—as these pictures of Europe's best internment camp show. One would expect to find barbed-wire, armed guards, and lines of desolate-looking wooden barracks—the type of camps to be seen in German-occupied France, Belgium, Denmark and Holland. But no barbed-wire and no armed guards surround the Swedish manor house where Allied airmen are interned. They live, in fact, like pre-war tourists. Humlebacken, near Falun, is everything a prisoner could wish for. The internees are provided with breakfast in bed, music, British or American cigarettes, facilities for winter sports, and many other amenities

AROUND the BATTLEFRONTS of the WORLD

THE W.R.N.S. IN CEYLON: A Wren from Goudhurst, Kent, plotting the course of ships in the Operations Room. W.R.N.S. officers and ratings, now serving overseas, are to be found in India, Ceylon, North and East Africa, the Levant, Gibraltar and the United States. The numbers are increasing steadily, and already over thirty categories of work, both operational and administrative, are undertaken

THE SWEDISH MANOR HOUSE, on a hilltop at Humlebacken, near Falun, which serves as an internment camp for Allied airmen forced down over Sweden, and where the internees live like a party of tourists

"EDDIE" AND "SMITHY," OF THE R.A.F., whose aircraft was forced down over Sweden and who were then interned at Humlebacken, in the bedroom which they share in the internment camp

AT H.M.S. "CORMORANT II.", the Royal Naval Air Station at Gibraltar. A group of Fleet Air Arm mechanics putting a newly-overhauled engine into a Beaufighter

H.M.S. *Cormorant II.* is situated on the former racecourse (now the runway) at the foot of the sheer face on the north side of "The Rock." The men live in Nissen huts, and the wardroom is a converted cowshed. Aircraft from most of our aircraft-carriers have landed and operated from this section at one time or another. In addition to servicing aircraft, a Fleet Requirements Squadron is very busily employed on A.-A. co-operation with British and Allied ships in the Gibraltar area. The naval aircraft based on Gibraltar have also played their part in the battle against the U-boats. On the right is seen a line of Beaufighters, one of which is undergoing an engine change.

SUPPLIES FOR THE R.A.F.'S NAVY. The supply ship draws alongside one of the balloon drifters which are being used for the defence of convoys in home waters around Britain

MR. L. M. BROWN, "FLOATING SALESMAN OF N.A.A.F.I.", serving a member of the crew of an R.A.F. balloon drifter from his open-air shop on the deck of the supply vessel. An unspectacular but important part of the work of the R.A.F. is the defence of Allied convoys by balloon drifters, which accompany the ships in home waters and protect them from dive-bombing. In peacetime, these balloon drifters were fishing vessels; to-day they are still manned by fishermen, and carry R.A.F. balloon crews. The drifters are victualled by R.A.F. supply boats, which bring meat, vegetables and provisions three times a week; and a sea-going branch of the N.A.A.F.I. accompanies the supply boat on each journey, taking cigarettes, chocolate, razor blades and comforts to the men

AN AMERICAN NAVAL FORCE SINKS THREE GERMAN CARGO SHIPS. These men are German sailors who were captured when two U.S. destroyers and a cruiser sank three German merchantmen in the South Atlantic. When this picture was taken, the men were awaiting transport to an Allied prison camp. The enemy vessels, laden with thousands of tons of rubber, tin, fats and ores from a Jap-held area in the Far East, were sent to the bottom after a 48-hour engagement. Hundreds of tons of rubber were salvaged from the wreckage and sent back to the United States

THE PARATROOP TRIBESMEN. Iraq levies learn the latest combat methods. R.A.F. levies in Iraq are being trained as paratroops. Already this year 200 of them have made a total of 3,000 jumps. The levies are all members of tribes renowned for their fighting skill and dauntless courage. Under their British instructors, they are being taught every phase of Commando fighting, from unarmed combat to the use of the latest weapons of war. They place great confidence in their British officers and instructors. This picture shows Iraq levies in their picturesque tribal costumes before going on leave from the R.A.F. station where they are training

A PICTURE FROM THE PACIFIC BATTLE ZONE. Circling around to avoid a counter-attack by enemy planes, an American cruiser and destroyer stand by as naval aircraft of their Task Force blast a Jap base in the Central Pacific. The loop-like wakes of the two ships join exactly, without overlapping

On right—**"ASKARI," THE AFRICAN SOLDIER'S NEWSPAPER.** *Askari*, East African Command's newspaper for native troops, keeps the African in touch with world and home events. Although its circulation is only 8,000 its contents are known to many times that number of Askaris. It is read aloud in barrack-rooms and passed from hand to hand. First printed in April 1942, the paper was taken over by the propaganda section of the General Staff. Most of the text is in Swahili, but it also contains a section in Chinyanja for Rhodesian and Nyasaland troops

TRANSPORT COMMAND IS ONE YEAR OLD

It was Created Out of the Old Ferry Command and is Now Operating All Over the World's Battle Zones.

By CHARLES GRAVES

THE coming week marks the first anniversary of Transport Command which absorbed the old Ferry Command for the purpose of increasing and improving air transport facilities vital to the war effort. Its role, presumably, is to be the R.A.S.C. of the air, with the British Overseas Airways Corporation as the flying railways behind it. But at present it is impossible for the layman to understand how the future of post-war civil aviation can be discussed at all, so long as the two roles of B.O.A.C. and Transport Command remain undefined. One would have thought that B.O.A.C. should (to change the previous metaphor) be the Merchant Navy of the air, leaving all military operational jobs to Transport Command. At the moment, however, the aircraft of the British Overseas Airways Corporation fly along most of Transport Command trunk routes, fulfilling many of the same jobs.

The official explanation of the present situation is that "Transport Command works in close collaboration with B.O.A.C., and between them they cover 90,000 miles of regular routes almost equally divided. When Transport Command was formed, the Government directed that it should work in the closest collaboration with B.O.A.C., exchanging information and experience, and avoiding duplication; and assisting each other to the best of their ability to carry out their respective tasks. The British Overseas Airways Corporation has a Liaison Officer at Transport Command at the express request of the A.O.C.-in-C." Which does not get one much further. But all this is by the way.

The official duties of Transport Command are reinforcement, ferrying, moving operational squadrons from one war zone to another, and the conveyance of Vips. Let us take Vips first. A V.I.P. is a Very Important Personage. If he is in the Services he must be at least a Rear-Admiral, a Major-General or an Air Vice-Marshal. He may be the Prime Minister himself or even the King. Vips receive special treatment and, if civilians, are graded as such by the Priorities Board of the Air Ministry. Apart from Vips, Transport Command looks after aircraft sent out to operational squadrons fully equipped with an operational crew on board which do not return to Command. The ferrying of aircraft from one position to another is an important duty. The aircraft are not necessarily equipped for battle, and the ferry crews, after delivering the aircraft, return as rapidly as possible to their home station, ready to ferry another one, which may be from any one of the United Nations to another.

When, as described, an operational squadron moves its own aircraft with its operational crews, it is left to Transport Command to move the ground personnel, the essential requirements, fuel rations, and other vital stores. Incidentally, it was Transport Command's aircraft which first landed in Sicily, where they assumed the double role of carrying supplies there and ferrying casualties back, thus saving hundreds of lives.

Although Transport Command is not concerned with active offensive operations against the enemy, it is now recognised as an Operational Command because its aircraft are required to fly in all weathers and meet the hazards of enemy interception. In this connection it is one of the anomalies of the award of Spam (or the D.F.A., as the R.A.F. call the 1939-43 Star) that flying personnel of Bomber Command who have flown defenceless aircraft across enemy-occupied territory between 1939 and 1943 are not qualified to wear it. This is a real grievance, just as the officers of the R.A.F. Air-Sea Rescue high-speed launches are naturally sore that they are not allowed to wear any small bronze effigy to show their arduous duties; although the Pathfinders have a special badge, and the other ranks of the R.A.F. Air-Sea Rescue crews carry a shoulder-flash of a small launch.

Transport Command mostly uses Dakotas, Hudsons, Liberators, Albemarles, Lodestars and Yorks. The crews are drawn from most of the Allied nations. This is particularly true of the Transatlantic crossing, the air personnel of which includes Americans, Poles, Czechs, Norwegians, Free French, Belgian and Dutch, not to mention crews from Britain and the Dominions.

All told, Transport Command has seven main trunk routes. These are U.K. to Gibraltar, Tunis and Malta; U.K. to Algiers and Rabat; U.K. to Algiers; U.K. to Cairo; U.K. to Gibraltar; U.K. to Karachi; and U.K. to the Azores. The Atlantic route does not carry freight or passengers except returning Ferry Service pilots.

Every month Transport Command flies 1,000,000 miles in the Middle East, carrying mail, freight and passengers. In the Middle East alone there are 16,000 miles of routes, and the M.E. Group, commanded by Air Commodore Whitney Straight, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., has already ferried 8,000 aircraft to squadrons all over the Middle East.

Altogether, Transport Command has had a memorable first year. Its work has been of vital importance from the opening of the El Alamein offensive across North Africa to Sicily, and now beyond Naples; the never-ending task of conveying key personnel and urgent stores. Supplies carried by air are of an endless variety—mail for the Services overseas, spare parts, medical equipment, including iron lungs and blood plasma, and so on. But the outstanding achievement of 1943 was the successful crossing of the Atlantic by the first trans-ocean air train, a fully-laden glider carrying 1½ tons of war supplies for Russia towed by a Dakota, in twenty-eight hours. Apropos, a York recently flew to Cairo through not particularly favourable weather in nineteen hours, including a break for refuelling.

Although the work of the Ferry crews may not be as spectacular as that of Bomber, Fighter and Coastal Commands, it is as vital as any in the Service. And it will become still more vital in the future. Conditions in Burma are such that a very high percentage of the servicing of the front-line troops has to be done from the air, and it is safe to say that the personnel of Transport Command will be the last in the R.A.F. to be demobilised. Already Transport Command is flying 45,000 miles every month in India; and a further statistic is that 85,000 miles a week are flown on the regular routes, of which the trunk routes comprise 23,000 and the North and South Atlantic crossings aggregate 47,000. Over the Atlantic alone 1,000,000 miles are flown every month.

To adopt an historical note, Transport Command's predecessor—R.A.F. Ferry Command—took over the Atlantic Ferry organisation from the Canadian Pacific Railway organisation on August 1, 1944, though the first actual delivery across the Atlantic was made on October 23, 1940. This aircraft was the *Guba*, a Catalina which took off from Botwood, Newfoundland, and landed at Stranraer after sixteen hours, twenty-five minutes. The *Guba*, skippered by Captain I. C. Ross, was the first bomber ever to cross the North Atlantic and the first aircraft ever to make a North America-Scotland flight. Moreover, the trip was made under the most difficult conditions. There was no heating and no oxygen, although the aircraft flew at 15,000 ft. during part of the way. The airscrews were iced, and the jagged pieces they threw off actually smashed the windows. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the crew were able to handle their charts and instruments.

The first delivery flight (of seven Hudsons) arrived from Montreal at Gander in Newfoundland between October 29 and November 9, 1940. They took off on the following day and flew in semi-formation until halfway across, when they encountered heavy cloud. However, they all landed in Northern Ireland with less than two hours separating the first and last aircraft. It was the first mass flight across the Atlantic ever attempted in winter. Before long, fifty aircraft had been flown across the Atlantic, and the intensity of the U-boat warfare made it imperative that a return ferry service should be inaugurated.

Six Liberator bombers were converted in the summer of 1941 to maintain this two-way Atlantic service. That summer, the two-way service was made the responsibility of the British Overseas Airways Corporation, which has operated it ever since; R.A.F. Transport Command personnel continuing to fly operational aircraft from Canada to Great Britain and thence to battle zones.

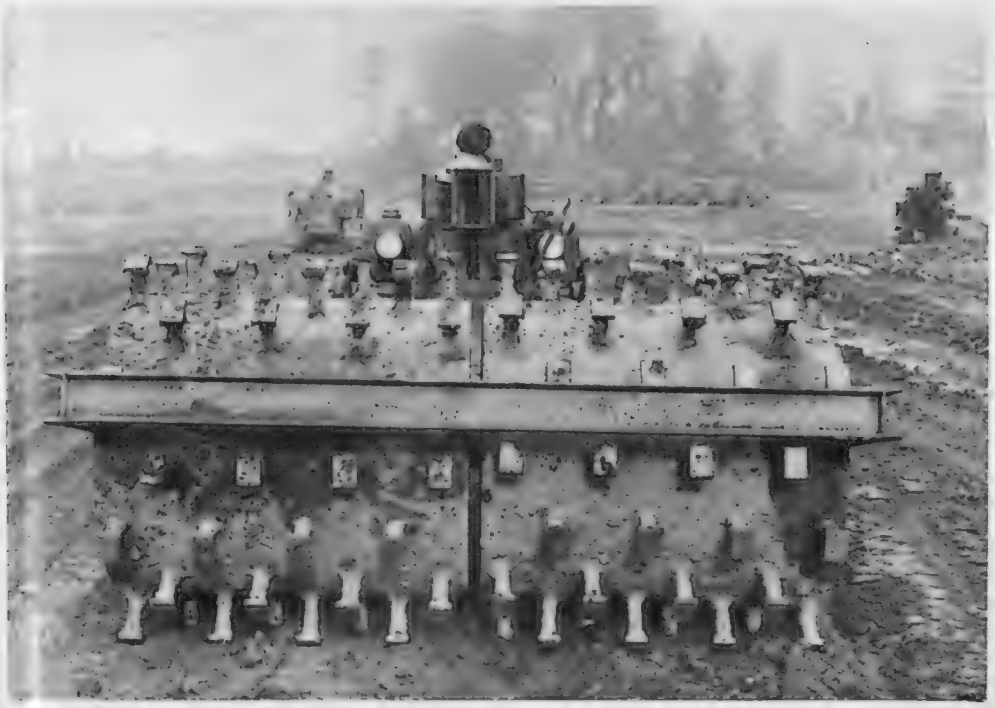
It is interesting to record that on Christmas Eve 1943 a Flying Fortress which touched down at Brunswick marked the 10,000th Atlantic crossing (shades of Brown and Alcock!). Average losses have been rather less than half of 1 per cent., no successful interception by enemy fighters having ever taken place.

ONE OF BRITAIN'S NEWEST TRANSPORT TYPES, and the commercial aircraft of the future: The York is the transport version of the Lancaster bomber; a number of them are now being used by Transport Command. The main external points of difference between the York and the Lancaster are the shape of the fuselage (which has been specially designed for passenger and freight-carrying) and the introduction of a triple-fin tail unit in the former. The York's wing-span is 102 ft., and its overall length is 78 ft. When employed over comparatively short distances it is capable of carrying more than fifty passengers; but it may be used for either short or long distances and can be adapted readily to take passengers and freight or freight alone

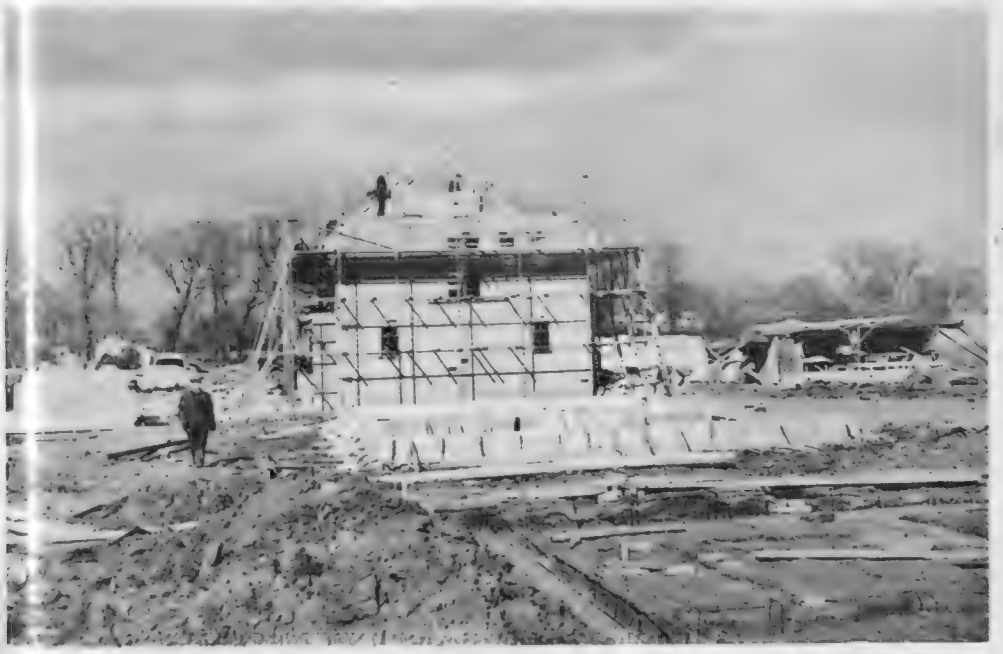
***On right*—This is the type of glider which Transport Command first ferried across the Atlantic in 1943. The nose lifts open bodily, so that jeeps and other heavy freight can be taken aboard easily**

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

PICTURES of HOME INTEREST



BULLDOZERS FOR AGRICULTURAL USE: A "sheep-foot roller" for pummelling the ground being pulled by a bulldozer operated by a Canadian sapper: A scheme has now been formulated for making use of bulldozers and other machine rollers after the war for housing clearance, road construction and agricultural work. At present such machines are being operated mainly for war purposes; but a number of them, operated by Canadians, have proved of great value for purely farming purposes



ONE OF THE PROTOTYPES OF BRITAIN'S FUTURE HOUSES under construction at Northolt. There are to be five types of these trial houses. The ten demonstration houses at Northolt, Middlesex, may well be the prototypes of the 4,500,000 Britain is to build after the war. They will be semi-detached. Each pair will be constructed of different materials, and they will be the homes of ten families to be selected by the local authority. There will be nothing revolutionary in the designs. The experiment lies in the use of new and little-known house-building materials. One pair at least will have concrete outer walls. Another pair will have a flat roof, which may become a permanent feature in post-war Britain owing to the shortage of timber. A third pair will be largely of steel. None of the houses will be pre-fabricated

A TRENCH-DIGGING MACHINE, now being used by the Canadian Army with great success, which it is thought will also be of great use to agriculture when peace comes. It can dig a trench 5 ft. deep and 500 yards long in a full working day on suitable soil, and it is operated by only one man

THE MAN WHO SHAPES THE STOCKINGS. His job in life is to make sure that the stockings which pass through his hands are in proper shape. Long before this process is performed in a more personal way, he has pulled them out on to the leg-shaped boards, preparing them for pressing after they have been dyed

A LAND ARMY TEAM OF THRESHERS. Six girls, members of the Women's Land Army, have been specially chosen to form a team of threshers. They visit various farms in England and undertake a real man's job of threshing and stacking the corn. They lift 2 cwt. sacks with the same energy as any strong male worker can do. The girls travel the country in their own caravan. Here is the complete team busy at work threshing the farmer's corn under the watchful eye of Mrs. Olive Bass, seated at the tractor in the foreground: she was a Court hairdresser before the war

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

A SELECTION for the SERIOUS-MINDED

Attack in the Desert; Turning Back the Clock; The Brutality of the Nazi System; A Biography of Barbara Villiers; Three Crime Stories

MR. GERALD KERSH is among the very few new writers that this war has produced for whom one can confidently predict a distinguished literary career, perhaps even a brilliant one. He writes vividly, yet with restraint. He has an inspired economy of phrase, yet can convey a scene or a mood with stereoscopic clarity. And in any test or trial of such matters, he would get roughly 99 per cent. for his powers of observation.

Nevertheless, his new and typically brief novel is disappointing. This may be because the reader has come to set too high a mark for him, or because for once his perceptions have let him down a little. But FACES IN A DUSTY PICTURE (Heinemann. 6s.), though amazingly readable, and certainly to be recommended as one of this month's outstanding books, still leaves one with the impression that it is not as good as Mr. Kersh could have made it. The story is of an advance by British troops in the desert, in the present war. The attack is a desperate part of a campaign that seems more than half lost, but it succeeds, planned by General Eagles, "mad in the same way as Gideon," and carried out by his grousing, confident, nervy, swaggering, docile, introspective, blasphemous, ascetic, roistering collection of men. Their objective is a wadi, strongly held by the enemy, and they take it. The book leaves them as they count their wounded and assess their position, and leaves all wider implications to the reader.

It's very good stuff indeed, but it's still not good enough. What is essential is that everyone should judge it for himself.

MR. PETER CHEYNEY CELEBRATES THE PUBLICATION OF HIS TWENTY-FIRST NOVEL: On March 18 Messrs. William Collins, Sons and Co. are producing the twenty-first novel from this versatile author's pen. Over 500,000 of his works were sold last year alone in the British Empire. Mr. Cheyney has had a very varied career: he has been a crime investigator, an expert cyclist, a keen fencer and—to-day—a Major in the Home Guard in command of a mobile company. His wife is the daughter of the late Mr. W. S. Taberer, who was Chief Commissioner for Native Affairs in Southern Rhodesia

Mr. Louis Marlow has chosen a fresh angle of the theory of experimenting with time, and writes of a young man who finds himself back in the 1920's, and apparently compelled to live a few months of his life then over again. Physically he is twenty years younger, but he is still aware of his life in the 1940's, and makes several abortive attempts to re-direct his old course of action.

THE DEVIL IN CRYSTAL (Faber. 6s.) is a little novel with an entertaining idea, written with feeling and, paradoxically, a regard for probabilities. The younger Jemmy thinks at first that, in the peculiar circumstances, it is his duty to try to warn people of the approaching 1939 war, but he soon realises that since no one will listen to him and regard him merely as tiresome, he must resign himself to the inevitable.

Jemmy turns back to his own personal life and, seeing himself once more being drawn into an affair he had with a woman he really disliked, he makes a tremendous effort of will and turns to a woman he scarcely knew in the '20's, but who is the only one who understands what has happened to him, and the only one who can give him any help. He has a brief, but idyllic, time with her, until they both realise that he must go back to his own period.

He leaves her, accepting the fact she will have to continue knowing his old self, who will take no more notice of her. They part and he goes back to his wife and children in 1944. He is listening to the news again—no time has actually passed during his journey.

Mr. Marlow has had the wit and taste to turn the general issue here back to a personal solution, so that what is achieved is a kind of metaphysical love-story, with a lightness and elegance of its own.

ESCAPE FROM BERLIN (Gollancz. 6s.) is an account of unrelieved gloom, misery and frustration; yet another tale of the Nazi persecution of the Jews, surely one of whose minor miseries must be to be called non-Aryans, that clumsy, hybrid term. Mrs. Catherine Klein, married to a Jewish doctor and herself Jewish, writes of her experiences in Berlin from 1939 to the day in 1943 when she at last set foot on English ground.

When it became evident through the increasing severity of the regulations governing the Jewish population that they would have to emigrate, it was only possible for her husband to reach England, and Mrs. Klein was left behind, hoping to follow him in six weeks' time. During that period war was declared, and for four years thereafter, in rapidly deteriorating health, and in circumstances of growing horror, she made almost daily attempts to escape from the country.

Sometimes the goal was America, sometimes Cuba, sometimes no farther than Lisbon; the only constant factor was her nightmare terror of the regime under which she lived, and under which her friends and companions were dying. Her eventual escape, disguised as a red-haired Italian, was made to Switzerland, and from there, by a route which she explains only as "trains and aeroplanes," to England and her husband.

There are no virtues of writing here. The style is regrettably, though understandably, hysterical. What strikes one is the book's sheer validity as a document; its cumulative effect as chapter after chapter reveals the increasing brutality of the Nazi system.

I suppose there is no literature more completely escapist than a biography of one of Charles II's mistresses, and such a book, duly described in that manner, has recently been published. THE GREAT LADY (John Long. 16s.) is not perhaps the happiest title for a work about this particular courtesan, for Barbara Villiers, in spite of her great beauty, her intelligence and her even greater vitality, had little about her that was gracious, or mannerly, or even reasonably controlled.

Miss Margaret Gilmour invests her subject with all the glamour—and that now cinematic word is oddly suitable—of which her pen is capable, but spares no pains at the same time to underline Barbara's avaricious spirit, and the unscrupulous nature of her demands. It is indeed sometimes difficult to determine whether it is Barbara, Countess of Limerick, Baroness Nonsuch, Countess of Southampton, and Duchess of Cleveland or Charles himself, to whom the author has taken the keenest dislike.

The biography is written with great zest, a quality which takes the place of others more restrained. There is no doubt that there is entertaining stuff here; that was, after all, the most important aspect of Barbara Villiers' character; but these are not memoirs to be taken seriously.

This week's crime quota is fully up to par, in quantity and, in most instances, in quality. The first example is THE LADY IN NO. 4 (Collins. 8s. 6d.), a murder mystery with a setting of pre-war English country-side, and good English inns as contrasted with bad English hotels. The intricacies of running a country hostelry, in fact, form a second thread to the more lurid story of drownings and beatings.

Mr. Richard Keverne has excellent theories about the one, and a good dramatic sense about the other; the combination makes something that is more than merely readable.

BLIND MAN'S BUFF (Methuen. 7s. 6d.) sets a faster pace, and moves the scene to New York, and to vast office buildings where prominent business men begin to fall through the air, down lift-shafts, and out of windows with little or no regard for the F.B.I.'s peace of mind. Mr. Baynard Kendrick writes with humour, or as much as is permissible in a tale of such dark doings, and with a certain crispness that I find very satisfactory.

When an author writes of one of his less fortunate characters that there's not enough of him left to make chowder, you know exactly where you are, and you can trust such a writer to know where the murderer is, too. Relying on the brilliant deductive processes of a blind detective and a Seeing-Eye dog, all the mysteries are soundly solved, and the survivors reach a happy conclusion. Bright stuff, if you are ghoulishly inclined, and certainly to be recommended to thriller fans.

FOUR-PLY YARN (Crime Club. 8s. 6d.) whisks the reader back to England once more, and to an apparently quiet Cornish fishing village. It is wartime, and Mr. Miles Burton's plot is complete with both murderers *and* spies. Of the three, I enjoyed this book most, and by quite a considerable margin.

Here, to begin with, is a writer whose long experience in this genre has not led him to ignore the value of other kinds of descriptive writing. He can give his reader a picture of a coastline, of a little fishing fleet putting out for the day's catch, of a lonely farmhouse well situated for black-market activities, of a wartime harbour, or the interior of a country bus as vividly as he can write of sudden death, with its accompaniment, in one case, of blood-stained knives and post-mortems.

GLAMOUR GIRLS OF THE W.A.A.F. Some of the performers who took part in the R.A.F. pantomime "Cinderafella," produced recently at the Winter Garden Theatre. The entire cast of the company consisted of members of the W.A.A.F. and R.A.F.

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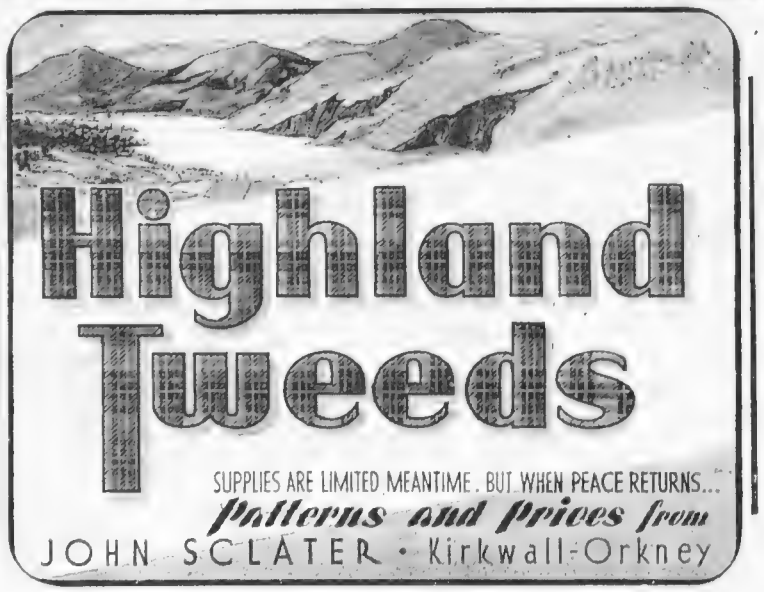

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V222

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They were youngsters from our village,
and lads from down our street;
The men who followed Monty, the deathless desert rats
Once played round here—with sticks for stumps
and lumps of wood for bats;
A day will come when bells will ring
and flags will be unfurled
To cheer the British Tommies
who helped to save the world;
Great men will tell how once they snatched,
high victory from defeat,
But to us they'll always be the lads
who went from down our street.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

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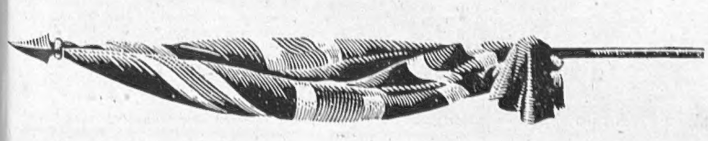

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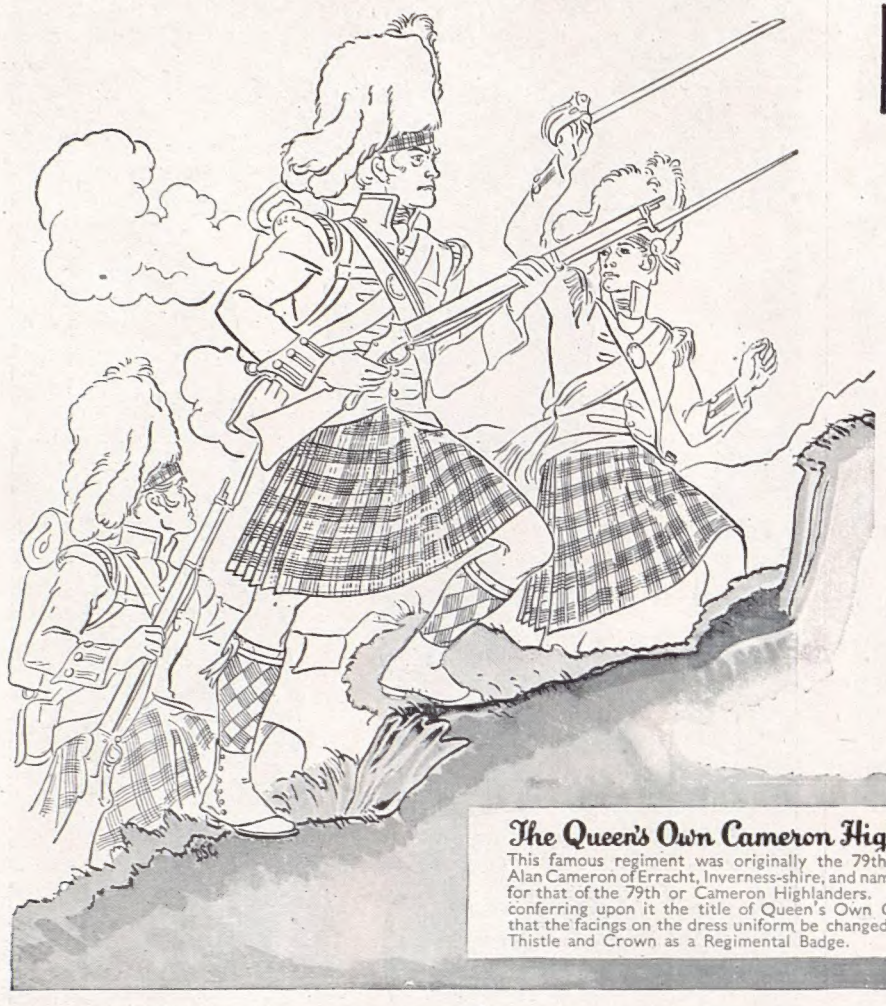
FAMOUS QUEENS . . .

LXXIX



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It is probable that the ceremonial drinking of healths is derived from the Greco-Roman custom of pouring libations to the gods. A more sophisticated age introduced the drinking to living personages. But it must not be supposed that in classical days it was the gods alone who enjoyed themselves. Horace found it necessary to chide the over indulgent with:—

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